HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

James E. Wagner

The Mind of God In His Church

Charles M. Crowe • A Durable Faith

Kendrick Strong • St. Valentine and St. Paul

J. A. Davidson • Story of Indifference

David B. Parke • The Face of God

When Ministers Break Down

Sermons by Neil Gregor Smith and William G. Rusch

L. XXVIII, No. 2 FEBRUARY 1957

The Pulpit

Published monthly by the Christian Century Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Founded 1929 by Charles Clayton Morrison as a journal of contemporary preaching.

THEODORE A. GILL, *Editor*
HAROLD E. FEY, *Contributing Editor*
GENEVA S. BOOKER, *Copy Editor*
LEONARD S. MEYER, *Business Manager*
Editorial Associates

Conrad Bergendoff, Pres., Augustana College
Oscar F. Blackwelder, Reformation Lutheran, Washington, D. C.
Harold A. Bosley, First Methodist, Evanston, Ill.
George A. Buttrick, Harvard University
Henry Hitt Crane, Central Methodist, Detroit
Edwin T. Dahlberg, Delmar Baptist, St. Louis
Russell V. DeLong, Dean, Nazarene Theological Seminary
Frank B. Fagerburg, First Baptist, Redlands, Calif.
Theodore P. Ferris, Trinity Church, Boston
C. Willard Fetter, First E.U.B., Akron
Jack Finegan, Pacific School of Religion
O. A. Geiseman, Grace Lutheran, River Forest, Ill.
E. S. Hjortland, United Ev. Lutheran, Oak Park, Ill.
E. G. Homrighausen, Princeton Theological Seminary
Ernest Marshall Howse, Bloor St. United Church, Toronto
William H. Hudnut, Jr., Third Presbyterian, Rochester
Homer A. Jack, Unitarian, Evanston, Ill.
Gerald Kennedy, Bishop, Los Angeles Area, Methodist Church
Harold L. Lunger, Brite College of the Bible, Fort Worth
George A. Mastrantonis, St. Nicholas Eastern Orthodox, St. Louis
Benjamin E. Mays, Pres., Morehouse College
Robert J. McCracken, Riverside Church, New York
Frederick M. Meek, Old South Church, Boston
Roy M. Pearson, Dean, Andover Newton Theological School
Harold C. Phillips, First Baptist, Cleveland
James A. Pike, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York
Liston Pope, Dean, Yale Divinity School
Edward Hughes Pruden, First Baptist, Washington, D. C.
James H. Robinson, Church of the Master, New York
Paul M. Robinson, Pres., Bethany Biblical Seminary
Frederick W. Schroeder, Pres., Eden Theological Seminary
S. M. Shoemaker, Calvary Episcopal, Pittsburgh
Ralph W. Sockman, Christ Methodist, New York
Charles B. Templeton, Evangelist, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
Alan Walker, Methodist Missioner to Australia

30 cents single issue.

$3 a year in U.S.A.

$3.10 in Canada. $3.35 foreign.

Copyright 1957 by Christian Century Foundation.

Entered as second-class matter May 14, 1942 in Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the act of March 3, 1879.

CONTENTS: FEBRUARY 1957

SERMONS

A Durable Faith ..... *Charles M. Crowe* 7
St. Valentine and St. Paul ..... *Kendrick Strong* 10
Courage to Be Christian ..... *William E. Hulme* 13
Story of Indifference ..... *J. A. Davidson* 16
The Face of God ..... *David B. Parke* 18
When Ministers Break Down ..... *Neil Gregor Smith* 20
William G. Rusch 21
What Next? ..... *David Noel Freedman* and *Theodore A. Gill* 22

ARTICLES

The Mind of God in His Church ..... *James E. Wagner* 4
Visiting Fireman ..... *Itinerant Prophet* 26

FEATURES

Children's Sermon 15
Memo 3
Poetry 15
Prayers 9, 12, 17
Pulpit Calendar 27
Pulpit Post 2, 31

Pulpit Post

Pastoral Call

SIR: Dr. Enslin asks (Dec.), "Why must our calls on our people, in hospital and home, be 'pastoral'? Why can't they be simply friendly?" What a good time C. S. Lewis could have using that question in his amazing way to cause Screwtape (Satan's undersecretary) to give Wormwood (apprentice devil) advice on how to "save" these Christians to his father's, the devil's, kingdom.

Remember Dr. Enslin's words? They are all italicized here. The others might well be pearls from Screwtape's counsel. *"I trust that this little interlude will not be misunderstood. I am a great believer in the value of calls."* "You see the excellence of this device, Wormwood? While it keeps the divine who holds it seemingly on the enemy's side, its excellence lies in the fact that all the while he is calling so assiduously in the name of *'simple friendship'* he is apt to overlook some first-rate pastoral opportunities in behalf of the God he serves, or whom his parishioners at least suppose him to be serving. That is the only reason, really, they give him his office. And don't you forget, Wormwood, that deep down inside himself, your minister knows this, too. That's why, when he fails, he's so apt to move in one or the other of two directions. Either he grows into a pompous, pastoral stuffed shirt who breathes out too obviously an air of unctuous importance, or he recoils so violently from this picture of himself that he thins out his calls to such *'simple friendship'* that the positive exercise of his pastoral function is completely lacking. Do you see the trick? Keep these parsons constantly extolling the virtues of visiting, but never let them get around to asking what their visiting is supposed to accomplish.

"And by all means, Wormwood, keep the divines saying to each other, *'The minister who is not often in the homes of his people . . . is losing a tremendous opportunity.'* Yes, Wormwood, keep them saying that, and meaning it, too. But keep the opportunity involved on the level of establishing important contacts, spending a delightfully friendly social hour, anything you want. Never let them suspect that they might be losing an opportunity for their Christ. I tell you, Wormwood, that when these little ministers do discover that they are missing the boat for their Christ, the little beasts show amazing vitality. They stand up under *'so heavy pastoral duties'* and even the *'fatiguing chore of pastoral calls in hospitals.'* They do! And the worst thing from our point of view is that after awhile they quit striving so hard to be *'simply friendly'* and now and again exert an influence out of all proportion to their own importance."

MILLARD REWIS.
Market Street Methodist,
Winchester, Va.

On Tithing

SIR: In answer to J. M. E. Stranger's letter on tithing (Jan.), I ask, should we do less under grace than under the law? Let's drop our membership in the P.P.A. (Pocketbook Protective Association). Is there a better way than tithing to support the church?

HOWARD DONAHUE.
Henderson, Mich.

(Continued on page 31)

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

OLUME XXVIII FEBRUARY 1957 No. 2

Memo:

MY preacher uncle, Theodore Pfeiffer, warned me long ago that the happy minister was the ne-deaf minister. I have had repeated occasion nce to see what he meant. Yes, to *see* what he eant: there is a kind of church choir cacophony that almost materializes on the shivering air. It is in such awesome moments that anyone would happily xchange an educated ear for one that heard everying alike.

Fortunately, this panicky moment comes less and ss frequently, now. Oh, there are still chairmen of usic committees who want three anthems in every rvice, preferably by Verdi or Rossini (at his most flamed), because the church music ideal is to lay e congregation in the aisles. There are still organts who stomp and flutter their way straight to the ates of heaven every Sunday morning, but whose cket throws me clear off stride. There are still loists who do their level best and are no doubt od-loved for it, but whose flat best is not very ood when you come right down to it, demanding a ve minute delay in everybody's devotions while the nger trumpets her brassy, lonely praise.

•

But all that is recessive, with public schools and ivate lessons and departments of sacred music and minary courses gradually breeding it out of the urch. It has been a long time now since I wanted tin ear for my common worship. The choir at the me church makes a mightily joyful noise unto the rd. My only trouble there is to keep from adding antiphonal bass line from the pews on the famil- anthems. And in the campus chapels on my egular circuit I can only wish that I were more of musicologist than I am, that I might glory even re in the splendid offerings brought by singing udents. The church's worship has put greatness in e world of art before, and it still does. The choir nging Palestrina high up and far down the long ve of the University of Chicago chapel, the choir nging tonic-fresh contemporary responses through- t the service at Grinnell College—these are starred ges in anyone's private dairy of devotion. None of is is necessary for anyone's true worship, of urse. But it is necessary to the world's worship at the best that the world has to offer be brought the church's altar somewhere in the world. And is a privilege to be present for that offering.

What I have been meaning to say is that the ear for music, whether caressed or assaulted by the church's choral fare, has an important place in the homiletical equipment. If homiletics is one of the fine arts, then I suspect that it fits best somewhere very close to music's slot. The natural relationship is with the literary arts, of course, but that association is so obvious that it need hardly be marked. Like poetry, like other prose writing, sermons have to do with words, with manipulation of those counters of specific meaning. Like the literary arts generally, homiletics is concerned for particular meaning.

But that literary relationship can be distinctly overplayed. The preacher who sees himself in the same business as the writers of books can write terribly bookish sermons. The minister who tries too hard to be literary may be merely lush. And the sermonizer who would be consciously poetic usually turns out something painfully purple.

No, staying fully conscious of our kinship with all who deal in words, we preachers will do better to learn more from those who work in the musical stuffs. It is rhythm, tempo and proportion that usually make the difference between the sermon that gets through the subject somehow, and the sermon that serves the Word memorably. For some, such rhythm will be as close at hand as the pulse in the palm, and such proportion will be the very structure of all their vision. Others will have to work hard to induce any of them. They will have to stir up slumbering sensitivities: to the curve and weight of words, to the rise and fall within a sentence, to the accelerations and retards effected by variation in sentence structure and length, to the verbal connections that make one phrase of many sentences, to the amount of repetition necessary for development of an idea and the precise point where that repetition becomes repetitious.

•

Naturally, our preaching will not wait for such cultivations. Week in, week out, the Word must be served. I am not even sure how much of this kind of analytic attention should be paid the sermons now under construction. In seminary, yes. But afterwards, shouldn't such analysis be practiced more in our reading and in our listening and in our private writing than in our sermons? Let the sermon not be labored. Let the sermon always be a direct utterance out of the best we are and have and know. But let us never relax the effort to make more rhythmic, various and proportionate the person who preaches.

T. A. G.

By James E. Wagner

THE MIND OF GOD IN

It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us . . . Acts 15:28.

THE subject of "The Mind of God in His Church" is as wide and as deep as the historic field of Christian theology, and on it the most influential of Christian theologians have spent a major portion of their time and their intellectual energy. For any follower of Christ who makes no pretensions at more than ordinary competence to venture into this field is to illustrate once again that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

Only two things can justify such an effort on the part of such an individual. One is that he shall walk softly and with humble tread, a qualification which I hope will be clearly evident as I proceed. The other thing which justifies the effort is the fact that none of us can escape the necessity of making the attempt. However inarticulate we may be in saying so, we clearly sense the need of knowing God's mind for us if we are to have any assurance of moral and spiritual security in our daily living.

Further, the necessity of trying to understand how God's mind can become the mind of the church rises from the criticism that ecclesiastical bodies have no right to issue pronouncements. They are said to be presumptuous, since no human can claim to know the mind of God. They are said to be improper, since no body of men can legislate for others on matters of conscience.

It is true that these criticisms are most frequently voiced by people whose habits or vested interests have been questioned or condemned by such pronouncements. It is also true, however, that the most sensitive and devout followers of Christ have generally moved with reticence to the making of such pronouncements. In fact, they have sometimes been so slow to speak when they should have spoken, and have spoken so haltingly when occasions have cried out for bolder words, that their reticence could be ascribed to timidity or to blindness; and there have been times when the church should have pleaded guilty to one or the other or both.

If the church fails to make pronouncements from time to time—that is, if it fails to declare what it believes to be the will of God for our time—then it fails to perform its prophetic function and by so much fails to witness for Christ in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. But it goes without saying that in arriving at its convictions and in then issuing its pronouncements, the church devoutly wishes to be sure that it has the mind of God.

In the Protestant tradition no ecclesiastical body can speak with arbitrary or dogmatic authority. Likewise, in the true Protestant tradition no ecclesiastical body will seek to compel men's conformity or submission against their conscience and intelligence and the free and voluntary assent of their minds and wills. But such a body can labor with the prayer and in the faith that the Holy Spirit will be guiding it.

I

Illustrating both the problem and the confidence which always mark what the church does and says, let us consider the brief claim which the first ecclesiastical council in Christian history ventured to make for itself: "It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

That could be read as a bit of arrogance and presumption. It assumes that man can know the mind of God. It assumes that these men—James the Lord's brother and other elders of the Jerusalem church, and Peter and John and the other apostles who only yesterday were untutored fishermen and small tradesmen—could know the mind of God for their situation and the problem with which they had to wrestle.

And that assumption seems all the more vain and unwarranted in view of the fact that as Christian insights continued to develop, the time came when the church knew that James and Peter and the others had been very mistaken about the mind of God of which they had been so sure. Consider the simple story. The first Christians were all Jews. But it was not long until Christ, who had promised that if he were lifted up he would draw all men unto him, was fulfilling that promise in a way his first followers had not anticipated: Gentiles also were accepting him as their Savior. The question then arose: Can Gentiles be admitted as members of the church, and, if so, on what conditions? Eventually God led the church to give the true answer to that question and say that men are ad

---

JAMES E. WAGNER, *president of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, delivered this address at the opening session of the denomination's tenth general synod late in August. Dr. Wagner is also a board member and vice-president of the National Council of Churches, a central committee member of the World Council of Churches, and executive committee member of the General Council of the Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World. During three decades in the ministry, at Harrisburg and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, he was also a teacher in his denomination's schools in Lancaster and a newspaper columnist.*

IIS CHURCH

ted to the church on no condition other than
t of faith alone.
But when this question was first thrust upon
lers of the early church, they were not ready for
They debated. They varied in their opinions.
ere came a time when on a related matter Paul,
he tells us, withstood Peter to the face for his
mpromising. And at the Jerusalem conference it
finally agreed that a letter be sent out giving
at we now look upon as a halfway answer to the
stion. In effect it said, We will not impose on
ntile converts our age-old Jewish rite of circum-
on, but we must insist that, as a token of defer-
e to the law of Moses, these Gentiles must
form to several of its requirements. That answer
not to stand for long, as the Epistle to the
atians bears jubilant witness; yet when they
e that answer they prefaced it with the claim,
seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us," as if
d's mind and their own were at one in the
wer they gave.
The church long since came to know that the
usalem conference had not spoken the mind of
d, and yet the church has read, the church reads
v, that claim with no sense of moral or spiritual
nse. For some other things are clear about their
ing said what they did say. Their declaration
a departure from the past and a step toward
future. They acted, and had to act, devoutly,
leving that their decision was in accord with the
id of God. And it must not be overlooked that
thing they believed at that time to be the mind
God for them, cleared the pathway to a great
truth God was bringing to light. By so much
y were bearers of a light which others would
ect in fuller brightness.

II

The same caution and hope with reference to
lerstanding the mind of God are illustrated in
spiritual development of St. Paul. No one has
r questioned his claim to "have lived in all good
science before God until this day"; yet his
eer as a persecutor of Christians shows how des-
ately wrong his "good conscience" was. It should
be forgotten, however, that the conscientious
sitivity which once led him to persecute Chris-
ns was the very stuff which God could sensitize
he further leadings of his Spirit and thus trans-
n the persecutor into an apostle.
The time came when St. Paul spoke with the
ualified certainty of a man who was sure that
knew the mind of God. "I received from the Lord
what I also delivered to you." "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." "One thing I do." Yet, at the height of his apostolic career, there were occasions when he ventured to speak on debatable issues, admitting when he spoke that he might possibly be wrong in what he said.

The seventh chapter of I Corinthians is significant on this point. St. Paul is there discussing issues of marriage, divorce, continence and related problems. If you read carefully through that chapter you will discern five distinct and different claims for the opinions which Paul, as a Christian leader, expresses. At one point he characterizes a series of assertions as "concession, not . . . command." A little further on, in speaking on another matter, he makes the highest claim of authority which he can possibly make: "I give charge, not I but the Lord." Shortly after that, taking up another series of issues, he frankly admits that he cannot claim to have the Lord's authority for what he is about to say: "To the rest I say, not the Lord." Further on, dealing with a different issue, he makes much the same admission: "Now concerning the unmarried, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy." And the chapter concludes with an equally illuminating clause: "In my judgment . . . And I think that I have the Spirit of God."

The full impact of that autobiographical and revealing chapter would appear to be this: issues will arise on which no clear and definitive word from God is given. That lack does not relieve us of a responsibility for conviction and decision. It does, rather, require that if we have been living faithfully and in the Spirit of God we must make our decisions and arrive at our convictions according to the best light we have, but do all this with the humble recognition that our best, by which we must live at the moment, is always subject to correction as the wisdom of God becomes more clearly our own.

III

These outstanding New Testament examples of the tentative and relative character of man's understanding of God are amply supported by the testimony of the Bible as a whole.

It seems to be anticipated by the very first sentence of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son." There is a long, long step between the book of Genesis where God is conceived in such terms that his voice could be heard as he was "walking in the garden in the cool of the day," and the gospel according to St. John where God is conceived as "a Spirit" who can be present in one mountain as well as another at one and the same time.

Or, compare I Samuel 15, where God is reported to have ordered, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass," with the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse

you, pray for those who abuse you." Something radical had happened to men's understanding of the mind of God between the time that earlier historian wrote and the time when the Savior spoke as he did.

IV

All this from the Bible has a word to speak to us about the convictions we arrive at and the witness we give to our generation.

It would be easy to jump to the conclusion that all convictions are relative and conditional, that we can be sure of nothing with regard to the mind of God, and that therefore it is futile for us to seek, and vain and arrogant for us to declare, what is the mind of God in any situation; but that inference would be deadening and intolerable.

It would reduce man to a mere animal, if not vegetable, doing nothing but keeping his body alive and reproducing himself. No dreams, no hopes, no fears, no plans, no aspirations, no choices, no penitence or glad experience of forgiveness; nothing inside him but a digestive system, a heart and the organs of reproduction. The very fact that we shrink from such a crude, bald caricature of a man is the basic evidence that it is not true.

Men must believe something about the ethical and spiritual nature of life and the universe, that is to say, about the ways of God and his will for their lives. And, because they never live to themselves alone but always in relationships with other men, they cannot help but advocate as God's will for other men's lives what they have come to believe is his will for their own.

If, however, they are as deep and true in their wisdom as they are strong in their convictions, they will always hold to what they believe in the humble and prayerful assumption that God may have some further truth or truer truth to reveal to them or to others.

As the ages have moved on some convictions espoused by men in their time have been confirmed by the lengthening testimony of time itself. It is this glorious fact of human history which has enabled men to say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident," and, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord. . . . and in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

V

These are facts, basic, humbling, as encouraging as they are cautionary, which must govern deliberations wherever Christians think and act together.

We must always listen for and respect the testimony of a devout individual. God speaks to men as individuals, in the secret places of their own souls. Prophet and saint bear witness to this. So does history.

But the individual who claims to have and to speak the mind of God is morally bound ever to remember that he lives and thinks and works under the same limitations as does every other individual. Another may have had a glimpse into the mind of God as surely as he. To become known as "an irreconcilable" may well prove a man to be a denier of God. Some men's hearts have become, as Oxford is said to have been, "the home of lost causes," not because they have been sadly right and history wrong but because they proudly sought to fence God in by the limits of their own minds.

For if the experience of Christian community as well as of political democracy has taught us anything, it has taught us a double-headed truth: that, on the one hand, one man who stands against the million may be right; but also that, on the other hand, in the long run the majority is likely to be right, since, when honest and seeking men share their insights and glimpses into God's truth, they have the advantage of checking their thoughts against one another and of supplementing the partial truth glimpsed by one with the partial glimpses of the truth achieved by others.

VI

We are confident that when any group of the followers of Christ speaks, God will honor its utterance of the best convictions it has honestly arrived at in seeking to know his mind and will, and will use what it lays before him as part of the scaffolding or the foundation with which he builds the structure of his truth as time rolls on.

It was no discredit to James and the others that what they announced as truth proved eventually to have been only a half-truth. It stands always to their credit that they took that half-truth's step ahead of the axioms and conventions of their own generation. The God who in Hosea's day "taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms" as parents take a tottering child and support and guide it in its first halting steps—that God, it is our faith, is ever lovingly content to have his children move forward by steps that falter, not necessarily because his children are weak but because, having come to know him, they are humble and wise.

The courage of the prophets by which God's cause is forwarded has always had its counterpart in the wise and humble patience of the saints.

Practical Test

ALL the living religions are going to be put to a searching practical test. By their fruits ye shall know them. The practical test of a religion, always and everywhere, is its success or failure in helping human souls to respond to the challenges of Suffering and Sin. In the chapter of the World's history on which we are now entering, it looks as if the continuing progress of Technology were going to make our sufferings more acute than ever before, and our sins more devastating in their practical consequences. This is going to be a testing-time, and, if we are wise, we shall await its verdict.—*Arnold Toynbee,* An Historian's Approach to Religion *(New York: Oxford). Used by permission.*

A Durable Faith

By Charles M. Crowe

II Peter 3:17, 18.

IME was when the paintings of the masters were renewed by the simple process of cleaning f the accumulated surface dirt. But in late years new method has been used. Many expert restorers ow insist on removing the outer layers of paint. his is said to reveal what are supposed to be the ighter, original colors. However, this method has een seriously questioned by notable modern art-ts. For instance, painter Pietro Annigoni holds iat such "restoration" actually destroys much the final shading, expression, unity and glaze that ie original artist intended as an important part his painting. He declares that the brighter pig-ents underneath were only the preparatory colors. ther experts have said that many pictures by otticelli, Titian, Rembrandt, Velazquez and Leo-ardo have ceased to be masterpieces through too uch such cleaning.

There is something of a parallel here in the field personal religious faith. Most of us start out as ildren with a bright, shining and simple faith. his often becomes a strong and beautiful thing the idealism of youth. But the years bring an cumulation of soil and disillusionment. In our esire to restore our faith we like to think we ould regain the simple faiths of childhood. This impossible. They were just beginnings. Then we ten to the scientific restorers who would argue id psychoanalyze us out of whatever faith we may ve carried over into adult life. Also, differences nong religious experts serve only to confuse us. kewise the sins, pleasures and perplexities of life ake us easy victims of the vendors of cheap and sy substitutes for true religion. In other words, trying to restore our faith, we must be careful t to destroy the original masterpiece!

All of this is to point up the need of a durable ith. Mature, modern man needs a mature faith at will stand up under the pressures and ques-ns of modern life, and not a bargain counter reproduction. This is not a new problem. It is as old as Christianity itself. We find our warning and clue in the writer of II Peter: "Beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

I

A durable faith is based on an intelligent understanding of religious truth and not on magic or superstition. It has always been hard for men to understand that we need to believe with the mind as well as with the heart. Robert Raikes was severely attacked when he started the first Sunday schools back in 1780. Church leaders said that the Sunday school would destroy all religion. In 1797 an influential English magazine declared that the Sunday school was "subversive of that order, industry, that peace and tranquility which constitute the happiness of society." In this country, about the same time, one of the most renowned doctors of the day, Benjamin Rush, advocated the removal of diseased teeth as an aid to personal and community health. He was roundly abused and challenged by many religious people as well as by doctors. They held that God had given us our teeth and that to remove them was to thwart the design of deity himself!

In our time this feeling persists, that religion is something that operates apart from the mind. So it is that many otherwise intelligent people choose to believe the most unbelievable things. Far too many of us rest our faith on wholly childish ideas of a vindictive, capricious God of miracles and of prayer. Or on superficial, mechanical ideas of the Bible, of ritualistic observances, of immortality. Or on some single emotional experience. Then when our minds finally do outgrow or rebel against ideas we can no longer believe, we are likely to discard religion altogether. It is tragic but true that a faith based on secondary issues is a fragile thing and lacks sustaining power to meet the challenge of the long years.

High religion has never been afraid of honest intellectual inquiry. In fact, the Christian religion welcomes it. For all truth is of God. And the more our faith is supported by our minds the more durable it is.

John Wesley was among the most highly educated men of his day. He received a letter one time from a man who said, "The Lord has directed me

---

CHARLES M. CROWE *has been pastor of the Wilmette Par- Methodist Church in Wilmette, Illinois, since 1946. For ven years of this pastorate he was chairman of the radio d television department of the Chicago Church Federa-n, for which he conducted a weekly radio program, "Day's d." He was also a frequent speaker on the "Faith in Our ne" program sponsored by the National Council of urches. Chairman for eight years of the Rock River An-al Conference Board of Temperance and trustee of the ck River Methodist Foundation, he is the author of sev-l books, latest of which,* Getting Help from the Bible, *o be published this spring by Harper.*

to write you and tell you while you know both Greek and Hebrew, he can do without book larnin'." To which Mr. Wesley replied: "Your letter received and I may say [it] . . . was superfluous, as I already know that the Lord could do without my larnin' . . . While the Lord does not direct me to tell you, yet I wish to say . . . on my own responsibility that the Lord does not need your ignorance either." So it is. And yet why do we often pride ourselves on our ignorance in one field alone, the field of religion? We don't dare act in ignorance in the fields of medicine or aviation or atomic energy.

If our faith is to meet the demands, questions and pressures of maturity in an age of science and electronics, we will have to fortify it with as full a measure of intellectual understanding as possible. In other words, we need to base our faith on the basic things. We need to know that God is neither a stern, harsh judge nor an indulgent Santa Claus, but the all-wise Creator whose nature is love, truth, goodness. We need to know that in Jesus Christ men find the highest expression of human personality as a guide to the good and eternal life under God. We need to know that the Bible is our spiritual and moral authority because it meets us at our deepest needs. We need to know that man is a moral universe, that God is in it, and that when his physical or moral laws are broken we destroy ourselves. We need to know that all men are brothers and are made to live in decency and freedom. These things are at the core of a durable faith. The structure of the universe rests upon them as surely as upon any laws of physics or chemistry.

All this does not mean that we are to rationalize our faith threadbare, until there is no feeling or mystery left. Quite the contrary. For the mind that understands all it can, is the mind that also accepts the things that are beyond understanding. Prof. Alfred N. Whitehead of Harvard was one of our deepest thinkers. Asked one time the essence of his own complicated thought in religion, he said: "Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;/The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!" Strong is the soul of him who is willing both to think and to believe where he cannot fully understand.

II

If all that we have been saying is so, then a durable faith is one that finds expression in deep and abiding convictions. The trouble with so many of us is that we allow ourselves to be swayed by whatever ideas or practices are popular for the moment. We are like the test pilot of a plane. He is required at times to fly upside down. As far as his plane is concerned he is still right side up. To him it is the world beneath his head that is upside down. This could be disastrous for him. Likewise it is very confusing for us when we are confronted above and below and on all sides with conflicting ideas and philosophies. How are we to know if our world is upside down or we are right side up?

The answer lies in the stabilizing power that comes with great moral and spiritual convictions. These are hard to come by in a generation that puts a premium on openmindedness. The notion of tolerance often becomes such an obsession that we are afraid to believe wholeheartedly in anything. We would rather be broadminded than right, even if we knew what is right. Many educational programs foster this fence-sitting approach to life and thought. For instance, there is the new doctrine of so-called "reconstructionism" which proposes to revolutionize our whole concept of education. It rejects all absolutes and declares there is no over-all design or purpose to history or the universe. The chief exponent of this theory is Theodore Brameld of New York University. He claims that truth is only what the majority says it is, and that the individual should think and do as the group wants him to.

This sort of moral and spiritual neutralism is impossible if we are to have a faith that is durable enough to keep us right side up in a world of conflicting ideas and unabashed evil. We need moral and spiritual absolutes to anchor to and steer by. We don't take our directions from the group mind. We take them from the mind of God, who is the Supreme Absolute, in whom alone we find meaning, order and truth in an upside-down world.

We don't believe in the "social consensus" as our ultimate guide. We believe in the sovereignty of Almighty God, in whose care and keeping rest the destinies of men and nations. We don't believe that the individual is only a minute physical unit in a vast social complex. We believe that man is immortal in spirit, born of God, equipped with personal powers of will and choice. We don't believe that moral standards should be determined by the group. We believe that killing and lying and stealing and infidelity and hatred are eternally wrong for each and every generation of men. We don't believe in expediency and self-interest as rules of life. We believe rather that love and service should motivate the actions and judgments of men. We don't believe that the future is a question mark. We believe that God's righteousness and truth will ultimately prevail. These are some of the convictions of men of faith that keep the soul intact and the vision clear as long as life lasts. Is the evidence of a topsy-turvy world against us? Then we need to say, with Wendell Willkie, "I would rather lose to a cause that I know some day will triumph than to triumph in a cause that I know some day will fail."

The stabilizing influence of such deep ethical and religious convictions as these was dramatically shown in the lives of those who survived the vicious brainwashing as prisoners of war in China. Edward Hunter made an objective study of these men after their release. He declared that the most important elements of their survival ranked in this order: faith, convictions, clarity of mind, a closed mind, purpose and confidence. He had expected this in the missionaries, but he found it equally true in the cases of many laymen: the Shanghai lawyer, the Budapest engineer, the top sergeant from Korea and the auto salesman from Detroit. These men told Mr. Hunter that it was faith and prayer most of all that enabled them to come through the ordeal. Said Mr. Hunter: "Without convictions, a

an was soft clay in the hands of the Reds. I heard no case where anyone without convictions was le to resist brainwashing. . . . And those who pitulated miserably . . . had invariably been lack- g in strong convictions . . . whether they were well lucated . . . wealthy or of high position . . ."

It is likewise always so for those who would sur- ve the brainwashing experiences that the years ring to us all.

III

If our faith is to remain durable, it must be re- ewed continuously. Too many adults are wholly different to the need of spiritual renewal. They ave the idea that education in religion and going church are good enough for children but un- portant for those of mature years. This accounts r so much immaturity in religion among intelli- nt people. And it also explains why our faith so ften becomes an object of skepticism if it survives t all.

The story is told of a young mother who had nt her little daughter to nursery school for the rst time. Some weeks later she received a report om the school that her child was "emotionally mmature." At this, the mother inquired with a ood deal of common sense, "If you can't be im- ature at the age of three, when can you be?" ndeed, we all expect the young to be immature in heir reactions to life as well as in their faith. They eed to be taught and guided and trained. A solid rounding in spiritual values and ideals is a good oundation for the future. But even this must be enewed if faith is not to die on the vine. The idea hat mature people outgrow their need of religion pure rationalization. The person who says that e had enough religion as a child to last all his life often covering up a cynicism that grows out of nful, secular, selfish living. It is moral callousness nd spiritual laziness rather than intellectual doubt hat keeps many people from developing a genuine elpful, adult faith.

Our minds must be kept active as long as we live r they will shrivel up and go to seed. Our muscles ust be used and exercised or they will weaken nd die. Why should it be different with the most agile yet most vital equipment of all, the spirit f man? Our souls need to be refreshed and cul- vated and exercised or they will wither away. The resses and strains of life will be too much for us nless the inner supports are kept alive and firm.

We do this by making faith and the expressions f faith a matter of habit. Not in any routine sense, be sure. But in the sense that here is one of the ost precious things of life. It is not a matter open constant analysis and experimentation. It is omething that is a normal and significant part of ur total experience. We pray often because we eed the fellowship of the eternal. We go to church ll our days because we need the spiritual refresh- ent that comes from the worship of a great and ood and loving God. We love and forgive and serve ur fellow men because we need to keep our spirits nsitive and clean. We read the Bible because it ields its treasures most to those who know it best. When we thus make our faith a part of us, and not something apart from us, it becomes a living and durable thing. It warms us, sustains us and keeps us from being lonely and afraid.

This quiet and undergirding faith may be ours continuously regardless of our age, our education or our condition of life. William James, the great American philosopher, told of a time when he was in a period of despair. He wrote: "Fear was so invasive and powerful that if I had not clung to Scripture texts like 'the eternal God is my refuge,' and 'come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden' and 'I am the resurrection and the life,' I think I should have grown really insane." So can faith sustain even the wisest among us!

Life holds for all of us many experiences of disillusionment and despair. There are dark days and evil ways in store for all who walk the earth. A strong and resolute faith in God, in ourselves, in life, in man, in the future, are our chief assets. But unless we continue to cultivate and nourish such a faith it will slip away from us and disappear. Let no one, old or young, be ashamed of the faith that is in him. For it is our one greatest source of life that is abundant, joyous and free. "Beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Pastoral Prayer

ETERNAL Father, strong to save, we thy erring children come to thee in this time of unrest and tension to pray for the whole world, to lay before thee our longing for divine intervention in the affairs of men, to ask thy guidance and directing care in every crisis which springs with swift terror upon us all, to seek thy mercy for the weak and the impoverished and the persecuted, and to plead that sanity and justice may prevail.

Our prayers are offered for the President and all who are in authority, that they may know in Whom to trust and make their decisions in accordance with thy holy will; for the United Nations in this time of peril; for the missionary task force of the church, as it seeks to enfold the earth with arms of loving concern and to create everywhere a steadfast, enlightened, Christian brotherhood that will be victorious over fear and suspicion and hostility.

When the hearts of the many grow cold, when hatred and violence hold sway, when war and rumors of war destroy the peace of the world, when passion leads to unbridled license, when armies march and men and children die—thou art our only recourse. We turn to thee, praying forgiveness for friend and foe alike, for all are sinners before thee, and only thou art able to measure guilt and to judge the innocent and the aggressors.

We pray in the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace, who taught men to love their enemies and do good to those who persecute them, and who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers—the sons of God."—*Herbert Beecher Hudnut, Woodward Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit.*

St. Valentine and St. Paul

By Kendrick Strong

IN the year of our Lord 270, 1,687 years ago, in the reign of the Roman emperor Claudius II, a bishop of the vigorous and persecuted Christian church was put to death by royal decree. Nowadays when the state passes the sentence of death upon a person, everyone knows that it is because the condemned man has committed an evil act worthy of the extreme penalty. But in the Roman empire, as within all totalitarian regimes, capital punishment was meted out not only by due process of law but also by personal whim. The upright of soul suffered along with the wicked. And because this bishop had incurred the wrath of the emperor, his name was added to the roll of the martyrs.

He was a good man, as we think of goodness today. He was beloved by the common people. This was because he had learned that "God is love"; and he sought to exemplify it in the harsh, pagan world in which he lived. He knew that God loves each individual and yearns to be loved as a Father in return. He preached and taught that God's fatherly love can be seen at work in the life and death of Jesus. By the power of his own personal example he showed, as St. Paul had done 220 years earlier, how the followers of Jesus may express the divine love in their daily living. Tradition tells us that he was unusually charitable in disposition, a tender and sympathetic shepherd to his flock and a gentle friend of pagans. All men, whether they were Christians or not, were God's children, persons for whom Christ had died; and the bishop freely poured out upon them all a great affection. Like St. Paul, therefore, he was beheaded in Rome by the emperor, not because he was wicked, but because he was good.

National Emergency

Now this, of course, is the judgment of faith and of Christian history. Claudius Gothicus, however, was not judging the bishop by these standards but by a totally different set. His enmity toward the bishop was made inevitable by the problems created by a crumbling empire. In most of the outer provinces the imperial control was disintegrating. Barbarian invaders to the west, the north and the east of the Italian peninsula had successfully challenged the empire that every Roman had fondly believed to be eternal. Like the British today, they had watched distant territories snap the bonds that tied them to the capital city. The net flung out by the hordes of Goths, Vandals and Alamanni was drawing tighter about Italy. The mother country was for the first time in danger. It was a period of national emergency and Claudius sought valiantly to mobilize all the resources of the country to hurl back the invasion when it should come. And he found the bishop squarely across his path.

Now the bishop, whose name was Valentine, was not unpatriotic. He must have recognized the dangers that threatened the empire. It was rather his high confidence that "God is love" that brought him into fatal conflict with Claudius. The reason for this may be traced back to the spiritual insight of St. Paul.

New Concept of Love

This first great evangelist and interpreter of Jesus realized that with the appearance of the Master there came a new meaning to the word "love." When the Greeks wanted to speak of romantic love or sexual desire or the affection between man and woman—the "hugs and kisses" kind—they used the word *eros*, for Eros was the god of romantic love. When they wished to speak of the love existing between friends, between parents and children or sisters and brothers, or when they referred to the devotion that holds people true to ideals or native land—the sense of fraternity—they used the word *phileo*. These were the basic words for love, but St. Paul discovered that he could use neither of them to describe this new Christian love that Jesus revealed and he properly understood.

Both *eros* and *phileo* dealt only with human love, the one born of physical desire, the other of mental and spiritual affection. They were of the earth; they evoked no thoughts of a vast vibrant love of God coming into men's lives from without—a love that lifts married love into a shining sacrament in the fulfillment of God's holy purposes, a love that elevates idealistic friendship into a means of growing toward God. St. Paul knew that, through Jesus, God had revealed to all men the kind of love he bore for them, saying, "Love one another; even as I have loved you." Because this concept of a divine love entering a man's soul with compelling

---

KENDRICK STRONG, *minister of the Brooklyn Heights Congregational Church in Cleveland since 1954, spent the seven previous years as pastor of the First Congregational Church in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. A graduate of Beloit College and Hartford Theological Seminary, he has also studied at Yale Divinity School, and is the author of* Sagebrush Circuit *and* Growing into Faith.

wer was startlingly new to the world, there was word for it in the Greek language. Paul therere deliberately took an old pagan word that had ssed out of everyday usage—*agape*—baptized it to the Christian faith and put it to work describg this God-created, divinely inspired love that derlies all others.

Self-Sacrificing Ministry

So when St. Paul used the word *agape* in his tters, everyone knew that he was not referring sensual or married love, or even to kindly philthropic goodness, but rather to "self-giving sacfice." This self-giving sacrifice has two aspects, ke heads and tails on a coin: the first is a spirit invincible good will, the boundless, courageous *illing of good* toward others; and the second, a *gorous concern*, an active solicitude for their physal and spiritual welfare. Thoughts and deeds ward others, prompted by the urge to self-sacrice, are required of us, whether the persons on hom we are to lavish them are friends or enemies, embers of our families or perfect strangers! God olds us responsible for the welfare of those about s. We love them with *agape* when we become conrned enough about their needs so that we will se our time, our energy, our abilities on their ehalf. How different this is from the fleeting deands of remembering our wife's or husband's irthday, or buying our sick child a little toy, or eing friendly to everyone on the street, or taking f our hat when the flag goes by! These are but ne requirements of *eros* and *phileo*, whereas God as called us to the ministry of *agape*, in which we yously give ourselves to helping others grow to ne full limit of their physical and spiritual stature, uiding them into the fullness of personality that od intended when he made them.

Martyred Saint

Now Bishop Valentine lived according to the equirements of *agape*. He preached and taught nat all men are brothers, and that each person ust give himself freely to serving the needs of his llows with the same self-giving sacrifice that Jesus ade. He believed, as did other leaders of the early urch, that the practice of Christian love laid two emands upon all Christians. One was to refuse worship the Roman emperor as a god and the ther was to refuse to serve in the Roman army. he early Christians could not bow down to the ill of the emperor and strengthen the heartless ntrol of a totalitarian government over the lives f helpless people, saying, "The voice of the emeror is the voice of God." To do so would have iolated every conviction that they held about the ving intention of God for man. Those early Chrisans could not accept service in the armed forces r the reason that the empire called upon them slay their fellows, whereas God called upon them serve them sacrificially.

It is not strange, therefore, that when Claudius othicus sought to meet the threats to the empire y proclaiming himself a god, around whom might e rallied the loyalty of the people, and by drafting every available man into the army, he came bang up against the power of *agape* in the person of Bishop Valentine. Who can blame the harassed monarch when impatiently he brushed this obstacle aside with the curt command: "Behead him!"

Thus it came about that the bishop joined the "noble army of the martyrs," being executed on the 14th day of February in the year 270. His body was buried on the Via Flaminia, and knowledge of the precise spot has vanished with the centuries. But the Christian church did not forget him. Years later he was canonized as St. Valentine, and the day of his death, February 14, was hallowed as a remembrance to him whose life spoke richly of the self-giving love of God.

Day Takes on Pagan Meaning

But who would suspect this today! St. Valentine's day has been drained of its Christian meaning of love, and bears for most persons only the frankly pagan meaning of sensual love. No longer does the day speak to us of self-giving sacrifice, after the manner of Jesus, but it tinkles empty little tunes, promising,

> If you will be my missus,
> I'll give you honeyed kisses.

No longer does it remind us that God so loved the world that he gave sacrificially; rather, it has become an occasion when we assert our will over others:

> It ain't no use to fret or sigh,
> You're gonna be my sweetie-pie!

No longer is love understood as the majestic requirement that we be concerned about others to the point of willing them good with all our heart; it has become nothing more than a "tickling about the heart that can't be scratched." And in this change we have lost the gospel of Jesus.

How did this unhappy change come about? How was it that, so soon after Bishop Valentine laid down his life for *agape*, *eros* began to dance on his tombstone? Whence came the big red hearts, the cupids and the infinite variety of sugary mouthings, such as this:

> If I am yours and you are mine,
> We'll be each other's Valentine!

Unhappy Change

What right have we to corrupt the memory of a saint who died to keep faith with a higher love than Claudius ever knew? No right, of course, but it happened; and it follows an oft-repeated pattern.

It came about in this manner. Among the ancient Roman festivals was the feast of Lupercalia. Honoring the goddess Februata Juno, queen of the heavens, the feast was held at the middle of the month named in her honor—February. It was customary on this occasion for Roman youths to draw from an urn, clay tablets bearing the names of maidens to whom they were required to devote themselves until the time of the next feast. This was somewhat analogous to the drawing of valentines from a common box in our schoolrooms today,

but with a definitely chivalric commitment. Thus at practically the same date each year, the Christian Romans celebrated St. Valentine's day—symbol of Christian love *agape*—and the pagan Romans celebrated the feast of Lupercalia—symbol of unconsecrated sensual love.

Poor Substitute

Since members of both groups lived side by side in the same culture, it was inevitable that these two special days should take on each other's characteristics and eventually merge into one. The damage was done when Christian elders introduced into St. Valentine's day observances the practice, borrowed from Lupercalia, of having their young people choose from a list of saints the one whom they would honor for a year. In no time at all the imperious, exciting rites of the god of love, Eros, had choked out the lofty idealism of self-giving love, *agape*. The feast of Lupercalia vanished when the Roman empire disintegrated and St. Valentine's day ruled in its place. Memory of the martyred bishop faded and a new figure came in, that of Cupido, the Roman god of sensual love, son of Aphrodite. Remaining in mythology ever a child, mischievous and unpredictable, who loosed, with eyes blindfolded, his love-laden arrows, he was a poor substitute for the early saint!

What can we do about it? Well, we can continue in whatever fashion we have, taking harmless pleasure in the day. Or we can put back into St. Valentine's day what has been driven out. This means replacing *eros* with *agape*—learning how to dedicate the holiday to the proposition that self-giving is better than self-grasping in all of our human relationships. We need such a day, to concentrate on asking not, "What can I *get* from my marriage?" for example, but, "What is it I still need to *put into* my marriage?" That is the original meaning of the day, to which we must return.

Proper Observation of the Day

No specific recipe can be offered by which anyone can cook up a new significance to the day. We will find out what a revitalized St. Valentine's day can mean to us only as we privately test the quality of our love by the divine requirement of self-giving sacrifice. Something of what this may mean, however, may be indicated in a concluding illustration drawn from marriage.

When St. Valentine's day appears this month, Robert, for example, will give his wife, Millie, a box of candy, while she will bake a special cake for him. They have been happily married for several years, we will say, and these gifts are little symbols of their continuing joy with one another. A contented relationship exists between them and they don't need extra rhapsodizing. Nevertheless, they welcome some little occasion such as a birthday or an anniversary or St. Valentine's day which briefly can fan the coals of their steady affection to a brighter glow. *Eros* is present in their lives because they have made a creative adjustment to the physical demands of their natures. *Phileo* is likewise present because they share friendships with many persons, and hold many ideals in common. Present also in some degree is *agape*—the willingness of each to sacrifice for the welfare of the other. Now the success or failure of their marriage will depend not so much upon how much *eros* or *phileo* they have in common, as on how much *agape* they share.

At the very minimum, to be successful, a marriage is a 60-60 proposition—each partner feeling responsible for putting into married life *more* than his or her just share. This is the spirit of self-giving sacrifice. Only those marriages survive that have a saving amount of *agape* provided by the deliberate intent of each partner. For God has given each one into the keeping of the other, to cherish and to nurture in intimate fellowship until each blossoms to the fullest personality possible.

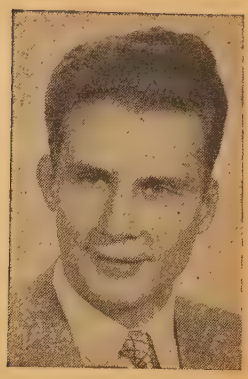
True Christian Love

Marriage is the most specialized and individualized form of divine love. Within it, two persons are brought into an intimacy found nowhere else, in order that each may minister to the other's deepest needs. They are married not to be ministered unto, but to minister. When the ceremony is completed, each partner is committed to being the other's special provider of divine love, giving endlessly of self. Now if each spends the opportunities provided within the home for snatching from the other, using marriage only as an instrument of self-gratification, they are betraying the holy purpose for which they were united. For by marriage, each has shut out anyone else from being that special provider of *agape*. It is a fearful responsibility, is it not, for a man to ask a woman to marry him and for her to say Yes? Each is really saying: "My dear, I can see folded up within you marvelous graces and capacities that God has placed there as all the loveliness of a full-blown rose is wrapped up in a bud. I want to help you unfold them and lift them to places of glory in your life. *I* want to do it rather than let anyone else. Won't you entrust your eternal spirit to me; for only in marriage can I have the continuing opportunity I need to help you become the person God dreamed of?"

Helping one's husband or wife or child or friend or stranger to become everything that God dreamed of—that is Christian love, *agape*. That is what Bishop Valentine died for. That is what buying candy or baking a cake may come to mean. Thus Valentine's day will become blessed to us when we learn how to use it for strengthening the power of God's self-giving love within our hearts and homes.

Fine Lines from a Prayer

O GOD, whose wisdom is beyond our knowing yet whose love includes all people, we praise thee for opening to us means whereby we may understand a part of thy truth and feel the saving power of friendship and brotherhood. Help us that we may enjoy the variety in thy creation rather than make differences the basis for prejudice and discrimination. Amen.—*Douglas Harwood, Federated Church, Lewiston, Maine.*



Courage to Be Christian

By William E. Hulme

Galatians 2:11-14.

THE early church had a burning issue. Could Jew and Gentile mix together as equals in the hurch of Christ? Or did the Gentiles first have to e circumcised and adopt the Judaistic culture of ne Mosaic law? The leader of the movement to ring the Gentiles in as equals was the apostle Paul. n the opposite side were the Judaizers, or cir-umcision party, with headquarters at Jerusalem. omewhere in between was that man of great pres-ge, the apostle Peter.

A convention was called to settle the matter. aul and his missionary companion, Barnabas, told ow richly God had blessed their ministry to the entiles. Peter told how God had revealed to him hat he should go into the house of the Roman enturion, Cornelius, to teach him and his family he gospel and to baptize them in the name of hrist. The result was the overwhelming decision the convention that the Gentiles should be ad-itted as equals with the Jews. But the decision eeded a lot of implementing.

The church at Antioch in Syria was the first to dmit Gentiles without the ceremonial rites of the losaic law. It was at this church that Paul was rdained as a foreign missionary. It was also at ntioch that Paul had it out with Peter in the ramatic moment of our text. In the words of aul, "When Peter came to Antioch I opposed him his face, because he was to be blamed."

Paul and Peter, together with other Jewish Chris-ans, were eating together with Gentile Christians. hen a delegation of Jewish Christians—presum-ly from the circumcision party—arrived from the urch at Jerusalem, Peter quickly withdrew from e Gentiles. The rest of the Jews followed suit, ntil even Barnabas was carried away.

This was too much for Paul. He stood up before em all, and looking directly at Peter, he said, "If ou, though a Jew live like a Gentile, how can you mpel the Gentiles to live like Jews." It was a nse moment. It was also a crucial moment. It was example of the courage to be Christian.

I

This courage is needed to defend the gospel from stortion. Human nature, or rather human pride, opposed to the Christian message. Who likes to ce the uncomplimentary side of his personality? ouldn't you rather turn aside from it, or try to de it behind your better side? Christianity is a rgiveness experience. It applies specifically to that part of us that condemns us. To receive the gospel means to face the unpleasant, and to face it without trying to justify ourselves.

This is hard on the ego. In fact it is the death of the ego. And from this death there comes a resurrection unto a new life that finds its justification in the love of God.

But the old resists dying. In trying to keep it alive we distort the gospel. We change the message so that it will not change us. Like the circumcision party in old Jerusalem, we twist Christianity to fit into our narrow way of looking at things, rather than fitting ourselves into it. One way to twist Christianity is to turn it into a set of rules. If one follows the rules, we say, he can expect to qualify for God's blessing. There is the added advantage of feeling superior to the people who do not follow these rules. Another way is to use our churchly activities as a type of atonement for the other activities of our life that are not quite so acceptable—to quiet the rumblings of conscience. In both of these ways we use religion to cover our guilt rather than to cure it. We use it as a help in continuing the way we are, rather than as a means for repentance. To repent is disturbing—too disturbing.

II

The courage to be Christian comes from a faith that is stronger than fear. Peter did not want any trouble with himself or with others. And to keep peace he sacrificed the truth. But what is wrong with desiring peace? It was Paul himself who said, "If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all." Could not this same Paul have been more considerate of Peter's feelings? He certainly embarrassed Peter. Yet it would have been a far greater evil to allow the incident to pass unnoticed. To desire peace to the point of sacrificing the truth, is to make an idol of it.

Notice that Peter was still bothered by fear. He who was afraid to admit that he even *knew* his Master on the night of Jesus' betrayal, was now afraid of the circumcision party. And again he denied his Master.

WILLIAM E. HULME *is professor of pastoral theology and pastoral counseling at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. A clergyman of the American Lutheran Church and former pastor of a Columbus, Ohio, church, he is a graduate of Wartburg College and holds a Ph.D. degree from Boston University. His book,* Counseling and Theology, *was published last fall by Muhlenberg.*

Because a person is a Christian does not mean that he has conquered all his old weaknesses. He has new power to cope with them, but the weaknesses are still there. Have you been dismayed at times to discover that old fears or irritations or other weaknesses that you had thought were over, are still with you? The best defense against old weaknesses is to realize that they are still there. Then we will take precautions, and the tempter will not gain the advantage. "Let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall."

It can be said in Peter's defense that he was a Palestinian Jew. Paul on the other hand was a Jew of the Diaspora, that is, he was born and raised in a Gentile land. It was easier for Paul to see the evils of Jewish nationalism, being separated from it, than it was for Peter, who was a part of that culture. Even though this gives us an explanation for Peter's conduct, it does not excuse it.

III

The courage to be Christian is undaunted by pressure groups. Not all that appears to be courage, however, is really that. Some people have to be different from others in order to be important. You know the person who stirs up trouble to attract attention to himself. What we would like to think is a defense of the truth may be nothing more than the stubbornness of our pride.

How can we tell which is which? When our concern is a matter of personal pride, we are stirred up with resentment. Somebody has slighted our ego, and we are determined to be uncooperative. On the other hand, when our stand is one of genuine concern for the Christian way, we have a hard time saying anything. We would much rather let the incident pass. But this would compromise our integrity, and so we speak.

The courage to be Christian depends not only on our sensitivity to the feelings of others but on our sensitivity to what is Christian. But sensitivity alone is not enough. Peter knew the Christian stand but under pressure he abandoned it. We can need the acceptance of our group so badly that we allow it to swallow us up. And it can happen to the best of us. "Even Barnabas was carried away." Barnabas, a Jew raised in a Gentile land like Paul; Barnabas, the companion of Paul on his first missionary journey to the Gentiles. What happened to him? He was carried away by the example of the others. He could not stand alone.

The courage to be Christian is the courage to rise above self-interest even though it means standing alone. We find this courage in the crucial hours of the church and of the nation. Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts, in his recently published book, *Profiles in Courage*, has given us stories of these crucial hours in the United States Senate.

One of these is the story of Edmund Ross. Who has heard of Edmund Ross? Yet to this unknown we are all indebted for the stability of our government. Ross was a young and promising Senator from Kansas, picked because of his opposition to the policies of Andrew Johnson, the President who succeeded Abraham Lincoln. When the fanatical haters of Johnson had mustered what they thought was the necessary two-thirds majority to impeach him, they considered Ross' vote as safe for impeachment.

But Ross himself was not so sure. He disapproved of Johnson, but he saw a dangerous precedent in allowing a fanatical two-thirds of our legislators to oust a president. If this were once our procedure, the executive branch of our government would be at the mercy of the emotions and politics of our congress.

But to vote against impeachment meant the end for Ross. He would be considered a traitor to his party and to his state. Would he be able to rise above self-interest? For a man of his integrity, he had only one course. As he cast the deciding vote against impeachment he said, "I almost literally looked down into my open grave. Friendships, position, fortune, everything that makes life desirable to an ambitious man were about to be swept away by the breath of my mouth, perhaps forever." And they were. He was vilified unmercifully and sent to political oblivion.

Would it be possible today? Already two out of three congressmen who refused to sign the southern manifesto upholding segregation have been defeated at the polls. And I do not doubt that they saw the handwriting on the wall when they refused to sign.

There were three men crucified on Good Friday, but that is as far as their similarity went. As Henry Sloane Coffin has pointed out, the two on the outer crosses were crucified because they fell below the accepted standards of their culture. The one on the middle cross was crucified because he rose above those standards. Society has a way of crucifying those who live above its norms as well as those who live below them.

And what of the church? Has it followed its Master? Too often the church has been on the other side. It was the Old Testament church that crucified Christ. It was the medieval church that resisted clerical reforms. It was the church of Russia that withstood economic reforms and so prepared the way for communism. It is the church in South Africa that is behind the apartheid policy that is working injustice upon the African natives. And just a few months ago in our own country, Dr. James McDowell Richards, who was then moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. (south), speaking to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (north), made this confession regarding the problem of race. "It is with deep humility that we face the situation existing today and confess that as Christian leaders we have not done what we should in preparing our people for this hour. For our failures we feel a deep sense of penitence."

IV

What is it that gives us the courage to be Christian? The answer is in the very nature of Christianity itself. God through the gospel has made us his own. We have something to depend on that goes beyond and beneath anything in this world. We

eed our anchor in God if we are to remain firm n our relationships with people. Courage comes rom conviction. According to the gospel no threat s really threatening to the Christian. "Who shall eparate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribula-ion, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or naked-ess, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we re more than conquerors through him who loved s."

Our fellow men cannot threaten us. They cannot ake God away from us. "No one is able to snatch ou out of the Father's hand." Our sin cannot hreaten us. How *can* sin threaten sinners who are orgiven? The cross of Christ is our everlasting ssurance that no sin can ever separate us from od. Our failures cannot threaten us. Our value oes not depend on how we succeed in this or that ndeavor. Our value lies in the fact that we are ersons, created by God, in his own image, loved y God, redeemed by God. Even death cannot hreaten us. For our Christ not only died for us, ut rose again. And because he lives, we too shall ve. "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, or angels, nor principalities, nor things present, or things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor epth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able o separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus ur Lord."

This is our conviction! We are living out a victory that is already won. "His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory." And now it is our victory—your victory!

Have the courage to be Christian!

Abou Ben Adhem

ABOU Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase—
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said:
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered: "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" asked Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said: "I pray thee, then
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great awakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

—LEIGH HUNT.

Flying Words

A Children's Sermon by Clarence F. Avey

Starrett Memorial Methodist, Athol, Massachusetts

DID you ever try to pick up 100,000 feathers? Some time ago one of our daily newspapers arried a picture of two children who were doing ust that! In a spirit of mischief they had scattered ll these feathers which belonged to a novelty com-any. But they were found out and the law caught p with them. At the court's decree they had to ork after school gathering again what they had attered. There they were, down on their knees ainfully picking up, a handful at a time, those housands of feathers!

Looking at these boys so hard at work putting o rights the havoc they had caused reminds us of he fact that there are other things besides feath-rs which, when once scattered abroad, are hard to ecover. Words are like this. Once spoken, they annot be collected or called back. They go out pon their mission of good or evil, and they cannot e recalled again. Like the feather, tossed by the ind, they spread abroad and cannot be brought ack.

An unknown poet has expressed this fact in ords that every growing boy and girl would do ell to learn by heart:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds.
But you can't do that when you're flying words.
Thoughts unexpressed may fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them once they're said.

The same thing is true of our actions. There is a deadly finality about a deed once it is done. We may say, "Pardon me, I'm so sorry," or, "I didn't mean to do it," or even, "I'll never do it again." But there it is, for all to see, and very hard to recall, if it is something we are not proud of or something which hurts other people.

All of us have a choice as regards our words and actions. When we speak or act we can resolve to do it without haste, and certainly not in anger. We can think to ourselves beforehand: Is it wise, is it kind, will it help other people? And, of course, you know the old rule to "count to ten," to give ourselves time to think and obey our best impulses instead of our worst.

In any case, before we are tempted to say the harsh word or do the unkind deed, we can remember the boys and their feathers. What cannot be called back again, unless it is clean, wholesome and helpful, had better remain unsaid and undone.

Story of Indifference

By J. A. Davidson

Luke 16:19-31.

THE parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is not among the best known and best loved of the parables of Jesus. It is a harsh, difficult little story. Its characters neither charm nor inspire. We don't enjoy reading it as we do the parable of the Prodigal Son and the one about the Good Samaritan. And because our first response to it is likely to be bewilderment, or even annoyance, we can quite easily miss the truth which flashes out of it.

I

Let us look carefully at this strange parable. It is, as Dr. George Buttrick describes it, "a drama in three acts."

The curtain rises on a tableau in which there are two panels. The first panel reminds us of a motion picture scene showing how the very rich live. Here we see the rich man whom tradition calls "Dives." ("Dives" is Latin for "rich.") Dives has all that this world can give him. His clothing is made of the costliest fabrics, and he is obviously a candidate for anyone's list of the Ten Best Dressed Men of the Year. His table is heavy with the choicest foods and wines, and for him every meal is a feast. Luxury and extravagance are the keynotes here.

The second panel shows us Lazarus, a beggar, lying at the gate before Dives' house. His body is covered with ulcerous sores, and he hasn't strength to drive off the scavenger dogs which come to lick at him. He is hungry, and as he lies there at the gate he hopes that some scraps of waste food from Dives' table will be thrown to him. Not a pretty picture, not one for the squeamish, this panel of the tableau.

The second act of this little drama also has two contrasting panels. Heaven and hell are shown together on the small stage. Both men have died. Lazarus has been carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. (In Jewish folklore the expression "in Abraham's bosom" was used to indicate the highest bliss of paradise.)

Dives, on the other hand, is in torment in hell. He lifts up his eyes and sees Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. He cries out: "Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame."

Abraham replies: "Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us."

The third act is a continuation of the second. Dives, in desperation after having heard the judgment on himself, asks Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth to warn his five brothers of the fate in store for them if they do not mend their ways. Abraham replies that they have Moses and the prophets, and that they should listen to them. Dives then argues that if someone returns from the dead they will listen to him and repent. But Abraham is not moved by this argument, and he answers: "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead." And the curtain falls.

II

We must not try to draw more from this parable than it contains. A parable is not a puzzle to be solved but a truth to be grasped. The parable of Dives and Lazarus is not a blueprint of the life-to-come, and if we take it in too literal a fashion we are likely to miss its central flash of truth. Jesus was always very reticent with respect to the nature of the after-life, and surely it is wrong to assume that here he casts aside his usual reserve and gives a detailed plan of it. This parable is not cold, precise prose: rather it is highly imaginative folk-poetry—myth, if you wish.

In this story Jesus lays bare a sin and points to a fundamental in the life of faith. The sin which Jesus here exposes to scrutiny is the sin of indifference. The key to the parable is in the callous indifference of Dives toward the beggar at his gate. Bernard Shaw once wrote that "the worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them but to be indifferent to them." And he described that as "the essence of inhumanity." Shaw has there given a summary of the teaching of the parable of Dives and Lazarus.

We aren't told that Dives was unusually wicked

J. A. Davidson *was ordained a minister of the United Church of Canada in 1949, three years after he left the Canadian Army as a captain in its Corps of Signals. In 1952 Captain Davidson rejoined the army as a chaplain and is now serving at Picton Military Camp in Ontario. He is a frequent contributor to the religious press of the United States, Canada and Britain, and regularly conducts a column in the* United Church Observer.

-at least not as this world judges wickedness. Nor it suggested that Lazarus was exceptionally virıous and deserving of heaven's rewards. And Jesus not concerned here to condemn wealth as such, or to commend poverty. The point of the parable, s lightning flash of truth, is in Dives' response to ıe need of a fellow creature. There lies Lazarus at ıe gate—hungry, sick, friendless. And Dives couldn't care less"!

III

I was once amused to hear myself referred to as a miscellaneous body." It was in the fall of 1952 hen I was at Camp Valcartier, near Quebec city, s one of a group en route to Germany to serve with ıe Canadian brigade there. As a chaplain I was put a section of the draft consisting of men from the naller and more specialized departments of the rmy. And as a member of that special section I as, in the parlance of the administrative staff, not nly "a miscellaneous body" but "a miscellaneous ody to be processed"! (In my imagination I could ee a shipping room in a meat packing plant, full f tins labeled "Canned Clergy" and "Potted Pare.")

"A miscellaneous body to be processed": that is a ir sample of the currently fashionable military ang. The drabness of official military English is uch that the soldier does like to put a little color nd bite into his speech. The popular use of the ord "body" has that gay gruesomeness which erving soldiers seem to enjoy. The whole expreson is really quite innocent, and I was amused by at the time.

But, on the other hand, it has alarming underones—undertones indicative of a menacing quality human society. To Dives, Lazarus was merely "a iscellaneous body"—and not in a whimsical way. he sin of Dives—careless and callous indifference the need and suffering of others—is one of the reat corrupting forces in society. It is the sin which efuses to see persons, each with his own sacred ngularity, but which sees only "miscellaneous odies," mere blobs in an undifferentiated sea of umanity, to be neither loved nor hated. Indifferıce is a more deadly sin than hatred, for hatred t least sees a person, whereas indifference sees only a miscellaneous body."

The complexity and confusion of life today are uch that the mood of indifference readily settles on ur hearts. W. H. Auden, the poet who discerns so early the soul of modern society, has suggested hat we should pray for those whose duties entail etty and unpopular responsibilities—inspecting, ross-questioning, issuing reports or enforcing reırictions—pray "that they may not come to regard ıe written word or the statistical figure as more eal than flesh and blood." Perhaps Albert chweitzer was thinking of the same thing when e said to a reporter a few years ago that our greatst problem is "to safeguard the integrity of the inividual in the modern state."

And it is not only those who must exercise auıority who are in danger of falling into the sin of ıdifference. All of us are too ready to apply the brakes to compassion. We tend to limit our concern for persons *as persons* to those within our own little circles—and even they are not always exempt from our indifference. This attitude is illustrated in a rather amusing little story which appeared in the *New Yorker*. In a fashionable department store, on a hot day, a woman shopper was seen holding her lap dog up for a drink at a fountain. A manager, advised of this, hurried to tell her that the fountain was for the use of customers. The lady looked contrite as she replied in undoubted sincerity that she had "thought it was for employees."

Yes, it is easy to fall into the sin of indifference. We so easily say, "Charity begins at home—and that's where I intend to keep it." We read in our newspapers stories of suffering and distress, and we say "Ho hum," or try to salve our conscience by asking angrily, "Why doesn't *somebody* do *something* about it?" And a detached, academic interest in the plight of others is often the most deadly form of indifference, for it can be indifference masquerading as compassion.

If we can keep our conscience under control and put on a bold front we find the mood of indifference quite comfortable. In one of his sermons the late Ernest F. Tittle spoke of "convenient ignorance." "If I do not know too much about the misery of others," he said, "I may not feel called upon to do anything about it." And it isn't too difficult to maintain a convenient ignorance of the needs and suffering of others, is it?

The mood of indifference in these times is easily generated and easily sustained. And therein is damnation!

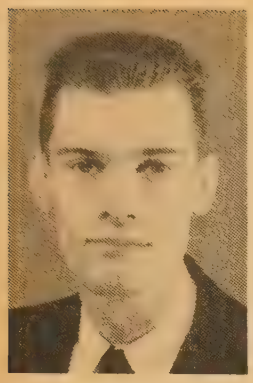
IV

Dives wasn't a bad man by our standards. And he was obviously a very successful man—and our age honors his kind of success. He was probably an important man in his community and made a positive contribution to the life of his nation. But he lost his soul in his cold indifference. With his indifference he dug the great chasm which cut him off from paradise. He saw Lazarus lying in need outside his gate—and he couldn't care less!

Elizabeth Goudge, the English novelist, in her book about Jesus, says, "It was not what Dives did that got him into jail; it was what he did not do that got him into hell." Or, as Jesus himself asks, "For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?"

Fine Lines from a Prayer

GRANT us, O God, our Father, the will and strength to fulfill thy commandment to love one another. So direct our lives that we may see the good in others; so broaden our minds that they may include all thy children. Create within us a passion for understanding and fellowship, that through reconciliation and compassion we may build a world of peace and brotherhood. Amen.—*Robert Merrill Bartlett, First Congregational Church, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.*



The Face of God

By David B. Parke

Luke 15:11-32.

ONE of the most wonderful affirmations a human being can make is that made by Jacob, in Bethel, on awaking from a dream in which God spoke to him, appointing him to settle in Israel. Awaking, he exclaimed, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it. How awesome is this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. 28:16,17.)

The actual, immediate presence of God is the most exalted experience a man can know. It is that for which men have strived since the beginning of time. We are told that God was present at the creation of man when he called Adam into being with the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. 1:26.) We are told that God was present on Mount Sinai when he gave the ten commandments and the law to Moses: "The people stood afar off, while Moses drew near to the thick cloud where God was." (Exod. 20:21.) We are told that God was present in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. In the words of Matthew: "All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel' (which means, God with us)." (Matt. 1:22-23.) We are told that God in Christ was present to the disciples on the road to Emmaus whereof it was written: "That very day two of the disciples were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem . . . While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him." Later, after Jesus had broken bread with them, Luke records that "their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight." (Luke 24:13, 15-16, 31.)

"Surely," we declare, awed by the silent, sweeping beauty of this cathedral, "God is in this place."

The certainty of Adam, Jacob, Moses, Joseph and Jesus' disciples that they had seen God face to face makes us envious. We wish we could see him too—clearly, unmistakably, here, now. But most of the time we do not see him. To be sure we see his creation—the manifestations of his power in forest and friend and mountain. We feel a stirring within, and believe that it is God speaking in us; but the stirring is momentary and muted. It is most often our own words formed involuntarily because we must respond somehow to holiness, and the easiest response is in words. We grasp at every straw—manifestations, stirrings, sometimes even at healers and evangelists—hoping to see the face of God. Yet we do not see it. Why?

I

We do not see the face of God because God's face is beautiful, while we have lost a sense of beauty. We have eyes but we do not see. We have ears but we do not hear. We have senses but we drug them with cheapness and monotony. We have dulled our capacity to appreciate, we have imperiled our capacity to be alone, we have sacrificed on the altar of mass production and uniformity our capacity to create for ourselves.

Beauty is the lost virtue of the modern age. Cars are "beautiful," skyscrapers are "beautiful," superhighways are "beautiful." But the petal of a solitary flower, the hidden happy bubbling of a brook, the curve of a cheek or of a mountain slope—these most beautiful things of all are trampled underfoot as too common to notice.

An airliner is unquestionably a dazzling creation, and always takes our breath by its size, its sleekness and the fact that it can fly. But have you ever looked closely at a bird, and considered *its* size, *its* sleekness, and the fact that *it* can fly? Have you listened recently to the coming of dawn orchestrated by bird songs, which are surely more beautiful than the roar of aircraft engines?

A movie queen or a TV actress may be unquestionably beautiful. But have you looked closely at your dearest loved one recently to watch the subtle flashes of movement in his or her face, to see a smile come stealing where an instant before there was stern inflexibility, to know the incomparable depth of human eyes which see a landscape of which you are always the central figure?

A Russian is unquestionably an uncommon breed of man in our country. But have you ever met a Russian—embraced him, served him a meal, asked about his children, or his heroes? The soul and people of Russia are a thousand years old. Her deep humanity will not be destroyed, only perhaps tarnished by totalitarianism. But whether Russian or American, white or Negro, friend or enemy, all are human beings and beautiful in their humanity.

DAVID B. PARKE, *minister of the Unitarian Church in Peterborough, New Hampshire, since November 1954, preached this sermon at the Cathedral of the Pines in Rindge, New Hampshire. He is a graduate of Antioch College and of Meadville Theological School at the University of Chicago.*

f we could only look upon others as we would ave them look upon us!

I am afraid that we have forgotten what is beauful, or allowed our sensitivities so to corrode that ve can no longer distinguish the beautiful from the rdinary. The face of God is ordinary by its beauty. t is here, but we do not see it.

II

We do not see the face of God because God disloses his face only fleetingly, while we have come o regard the spirit as something permanent, to e possessed or manipulated. Jacob's affirmation hat "surely the Lord is in this place," is followed y the poignant confession, "and I did not know t." Similarly Luke tells us that in the moment at Emmaus when the disciples saw the face of God n Christ, "their eyes were opened and they recogized him; and he vanished out of their sight." As soon as we recognize God, he vanishes from our ight. I think this is because we try to appropriate im to our own uses.

We see a glorious sunrise or sunset and think we nust describe it in words. It cannot be described, nowever—only experienced. And so it fades away, whereas a sunrise that is purely experienced from he depths of the heart to the heights of creation never fades away—it becomes a part of us.

We see the face of God disclosed in a new acquaintance, and think we must possess him, must ell him everything about ourselves, must make him our friend alone. But he does not submit. He wanders quickly from our presence, often never to return. If, on the other hand, we delight in his presence for the time that is allotted us and then allow his light to shine on others, blessing them as t has blessed us, his spirit will be secured forever n us. If you have ever been in the presence of a great man you will know what I mean. The spirit of such men is too broad and quick to be contained n a relationship with one person or a few. Through he faces of such men we see the face of God, appearing to us, knowing our need and readiness; hey must flee from us, knowing our limitations yet leaving us ennobled.

Or perhaps we conceive a plan that is so singular and wonderful that it seems to us that God himself nust have inspired it. Such a plan might be a church, or the Christian church, or a monument. Having seen the face of God for a fleeting moment ve attempt to institutionalize it in stone or creed or custom. But by this very act we exclude it from our lives. The face of God must ever be seen anew. Victims of pride, we become slaves of vanity only o find that the spirit which bloweth where it listeth, bloweth not on a proud man or a vain enterprise. The spirit that becomes power is no longer spirit. It is transmuted from something divine to something human and, although as power it may serve a useful purpose, it cannot become divine again except through another transmutation, an act of radical redirection by which it attains contact with God once again. As spirit it is creative, as power it is created. Unless the spirit constantly returns to the source of creativity, unless men constantly seek out the face of God anew, the spirit perishes.

III

We do not see the face of God because God is in a human face, while we are accustomed, in looking at each other, to see only another person. Yet, in William Blake's words,

> . . . Mercy has a human heart,
> Pity, a human face,
> And Love, the human form divine,
> And Peace, the human dress.

Who can look into the face of a little child and fail to see God? Who can look at great love, or great passion, or great suffering and fail to see God present in that love, that passion, that agony, forging his destiny in human lives? Above all who can forgive—or be forgiven—and fail to perceive the face of God radiant in the act?

When speaking of forgiveness we return to the story of the prodigal son. Prodigal means wastefully or recklessly extravagant. The prodigal son left his father and squandered his money in riotous living. Later, after a life of sin, he desired to be with his family again, and returned home humble and contrite. "But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him." Then the father ordered a great feast and dance to be held in honor of his son's return. When the other son objected the father replied, "It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." (Luke 15:20, 32.)

In the face of the son—the loose-living, licentious, irresponsible son, but the son who had come home again—the father saw the face of God. In the face of the father—lonesome, betrayed, heartbroken, yet compassionate and forgiving—the son saw the face of God. Each was God to the other, and God was in their meeting.

Too often we fail to see the face of God in persons. It is there, but we ignore it. We judge, we deny, we oppose, we distort, we misunderstand. But we seldom forgive, because to forgive seems to be a sign of weakness. Yet to forgive is to be strong. It is to see the face of God in another and to love that other, though it may be the hardest thing in the world to do, because he is a part of God, and indeed through God is a part of our very selves.

IV

Look closely, therefore, if you would see the face of God—now in true beauty that is simple and pure and unfathomable; now in fleeting moments when eternity intrudes into time, grasping us, transforming us, transcending our pettiness and pride; now in the human face, transfigured by forgiveness. God is in all of these. He is in you. He is in the world. He created the world and the world recreates him in every moment. He is here. See him! Let him grasp you!

Neil Gregor Smith Recalls
The Story of Elijah

WHEN MINISTERS

ATTENTION has been called to the distressing frequency with which ministers break down under the strain and pressure of their work. Life is never very easy for any of us who are stretched "upon the rack of this tough world," but the life of a conscientious minister in the modern church is exposed to tensions which are particularly severe. Under the demand that the minister of today be an expert counselor, administrator, business executive, youth worker, orator and scholar, it is not surprising that some break down.

In the story of Elijah in I Kings 19 we read of a minister of olden days who broke down, and recovered. He had been a very successful minister, but under the incessant strain of his calling he suffered a complete breakdown. He abandoned his work, went off to the wilderness, and concluded that life was not worth living: He asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers."

Quick Recovery

What interests us here particularly is not so much that a man once felt like this, as that a man once felt like this and recovered so quickly. The story which opens with Elijah in a mood of despondency and dejection, closes with the account of the prophet returning to his work with renewed faith and vigor, with a helper by his side.

What therapy had accomplished such a cure? The account of Elijah's experience not only suggests some of the causes for his breakdown but indicates also some of the steps taken to effect a cure for his condition. Both the causes and the cures for his condition have relevance for men and women of today, exposed to the tensions and strains imposed upon us in our modern society.

One obvious cause for Elijah's breakdown was sheer physical exhaustion. He had been trying to do too much. His ambitions were boundless. There were all sorts of things he wanted to do, and he had limited time and limited strength with which to do them. He had set his heart upon a reformation of Israel. He had been distressed at the neglect of the worship of Jehovah and the ascendancy of the worship of Baal. The broken and neglected altars of Jehovah troubled him immensely, and he had striven mightily to remedy a deplorable situation.

Sympathetic and Conscientious

A man with a sensitive conscience and broad sympathies is exposed to many anxieties which do not trouble his contemporaries. When British soldiers were dying of neglected wounds in the Crimea there were many who did not care. A few cared greatly. Florence Nightingale cared enough to attempt to do something about it. Men and women of broad sympathies and sensitive consciences are always troubled when their brethren are troubled. They say with St. Paul: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?"

While the majority of his contemporaries were prepared to accept a deplorable situation, Elijah had cared enough about the religious condition of Israel to attempt to improve it. He had labored with might and main to discredit the worship of Baal and to exalt the worship of Jehovah. In this most commendable effort he exhausted his strength.

One of the occupational hazards of a minister's calling is the wide gulf which exists between what he wants to do and what he is able to do. He wants to be a friend and counselor for his people. He wants to work for all good causes in his community. He wants to see the cause of Christ advanced in the world. He wants to bring helpful messages to his people, week after week. He wants to keep abreast of advances in the study of the Bible. He would not be a conscientious minister if he did not want these things. Yet no man can excel in them all. Much can be accomplished through strict economy of time and efficiency of work-habits, but, with the utmost economy of time and the utmost efficiency of work-habits, a distressing gulf still remains between what he wants to do and what he can do. He has to learn how to live with this disparity between ambition and ability.

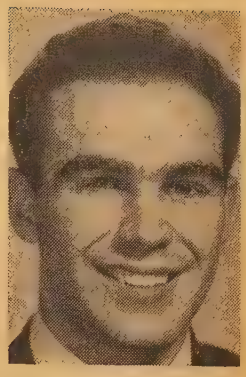
Overloaded Circuit

When too many appliances are attached to one electric outlet there is one certain result: a fuse blows. When man overtaxes his abilities for too long, or too continuously, there is a comparable

(Continued on page 28)

NEIL GREGOR SMITH, *librarian of Knox College, Toronto, was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1935. After ten years in the pastorate he served in Toronto for seven years as editor of Presbyterian publications. In 1952 he was appointed librarian, and for the last two years has lectured in homiletics in Knox College. He has contributed numerous articles to Canadian and American periodicals.*

William G. Rusch Finds Guidance In the Words of Jesus



BREAK DOWN

AN article in *Life* magazine recently cited instance after instance of ministers who were nder psychiatric care, who had been forced to ave the ministry, who had worn out before forty, r who had even committed suicide. In one Methoist conference we hear that every two weeks during ne first half of 1956 some minister suffered a heart ttack.

The *Life* article pointed out that little has been aid regarding this problem because most people ink that a minister of the gospel, a man of God, ould be immune from breakdowns. The question asked, "If he were really a man of faith, would he ave cracked up?" Unspoken but nonetheless underood is the sarcastic challenge, "Minister, save thylf." But if a minister is to serve as a spiritual ader of his people, and help them to find their ay through days of turmoil and the chasms of ental and physical anguish that our times of ress and strain produce, this question cannot be oided.

Impossible Role

In seminary we were advised to preach on our vn sins, since we knew more about them than out other people's sins. This sermon is delivered full awareness that there was once a clergyman ho announced a series of seven sermons on "How Avoid a Nervous Breakdown," and then had ne himself after the fourth sermon.

The article in *Life* suggests that the explanation the problem lies principally in the fact that the inister's role, as conceived by members of conregations, has become impossible. It is a role that individual human being, not even one of the velve apostles, could adequately fill.

The old saw has the minister's work week consting of an hour's labor on Sunday morning. In ntrast, a recent study by Dr. Samuel Blizzard, sociologist at Pennsylvania State University, reals that the average urban minister works ten and one-half hours every day, seven days a week.

A minister in North Carolina recently prepared a questionnaire asking members of his congregation to tell him how much time they thought he should give each week to each of his responsibilities in the church and the community. Parishioners were shocked to discover that the average work week indicated by their answers to the questionnaire totaled 82 hours. One answer proposed a schedule of 200 hours—32 more than there are in a week.

Frustrated Americans

Dr. Blizzard's study points out that the minister's dilemma is further increased by the fact that he actually is forced to spend most of his time doing those things that he feels are least important. Both rural and urban pastors find that one-half of their work day is taken up by administration and organization, which they consider their least important duty, and for which they are least prepared. Preaching and pastoral work, which they feel is most important, is allowed less time. For example, ministers who can find only 38 minutes each day for sermon preparation are required to give one hour and four minutes a day to stenographic tasks.

The frustration of being unable to spend enough time on what he feels is important, the fear of failure, which today is America's unpardonable sin, and the feeling of anxiety and guilt because some job is not done—all these plague and gnaw at the minister. He tries but he fails. Again he tries and again he fails. And the greater his sense of dedication, the harder he works and the greater become the demands upon him.

Common Problem

He feels duty bound to work for the Kingdom; and so, despite being intelligent enough to see the consequences, he continues to preach on mental health, and peace of mind, and a day of rest, and Christian family life, but fails to observe what he proclaims. He ignores his health, neglects his family and fails to take a day in which to gain perspective.

The point of this sermon is that the ministry offers but one example of a problem typical of life today. Almost every so-called successful human being in our overbusy, demanding world falls heir

(Continued on page 30)

WILLIAM G. RUSCH, *a graduate of Washington and Jefferon College in Washington, Pennsylvania, returned to that ty three years ago as pastor of the Second Presbyterian urch. His college studies were interrupted for three years ile he served as an Air Force navigator and rescue boat ipper. Later, while studying at Western Theological Semiry, he served Pittsburgh area churches and earned a mas- of education degree at the University of Pittsburgh before oving on to organize the Hamilton Presbyterian Church suburban South Hills.*

Fourth in a Series of Sermons Based on Jeremiah

What Next?

By David Noel Freedman and Theodore A. Gill

WHAT a difference there is in times! We, in the midst of our own clamor and alarms, find it hard to believe when the Vicar of Wakefield describes his family life in the 18th century. The pompous old parson writes, "The year was spent in moral or rural amusements, in visiting our rich neighbors, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown." And *that* was in *this* world! Or was it? Is there any significant sense in which our world and that one can be said to be the same? "No revolutions, no fatigues," indeed. While we have whole continents in rebellion, and whole nations on the verge of exhaustion. Fireside adventure, was it, and migrations from the blue bed to the brown? Well, our adventures run to blood, and our migrations carry us around the earth.

What of Tomorrow?

If this kind of radical change is possible in a few generations, what happens next? Where do we go from here? How will history be overhauled in the new year before us? The turmoil and tumult is loud about us. Now, more than ever, we want to know what is coming; with more reason than ever we are on edge for some hint of what is ahead. Would that there were some keyhole in the door of today, we think. We wouldn't care who caught us peeking into all the tomorrows beyond. Or if only history were as accommodating as those large construction companies in our town, which equip the fences around their excavations with glass windows for the sidewalk superintendents. Wouldn't it be wonderful if time came so equipped, and we could pause in passing to look over the prospects of the future?

Of course nothing like this is possible. But still we wish and yearn to be able to rip the veil which seems so thin between what is and what will be, and look our fill upon things that will come to pass. Mind you, this wish is more than frivolous whimsy. We really *need* to know something of what we can expect. If we are to be ready for what comes, if we are to be prepared for tomorrow, it would help a lot to have some idea of what we can count on. That is what is behind our yen for a look ahead. We are not simply sensation-seekers. For our very lives' sake, and for the sake of our Christian witness, we ought to know all there is to know about what happens next.

Jeremiah's View of the Future

Christians, interested in the long look ahead, turn naturally to the prophets—those Old Testament worthies who looked across the centuries and saw the Christ, and peered even beyond him into our very own day, and then still farther down the ages ahead. Far, far, far down the long corridor of time they looked, and set down for us what they saw. In Jeremiah 4:23-26 we see again two of those visions; we hear Jeremiah reporting the chaos he perceived ahead:

> I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
> and to the heavens, and they had no light.
> I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking,
> and all the hills moved to and fro.
> I looked, and lo, there was no man,
> and all the birds of the air had fled.
> I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert,
> and all its cities were laid in ruins
> before the Lord, before his fierce anger.

That makes sense. Awful as it looks, it makes sense. It *can* happen here, and we know it. Oh, how well we know it! We get it not only from the Bible but from our morning newspapers, and from placards in the subway, and from white signs on selected buildings. These latter-day advices are couched in terse terms of civilian defense, and military service, and atom bomb instructions. But they echo Jeremiah's more cadenced measures about mountains quaking, and hills moving, and mankind vanished, and the birds flown away, and the rich land a desert, and all the cities in ruins. Yes, that makes sense; we know what he means, we see what he saw; that strikes home, that is real.

Isaiah's Hopeful Prediction

But then there is that other prophecy—the picture drawn for us by Isaiah (2:2-4), from his long look ahead. He looked down the same broad avenue of the centuries, and made out at the far end quite another vision.

DAVID NOEL FREEDMAN *is professor of Hebrew and Old Testament literature at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh and editor of the Journal of Biblical Literature. He is the co-author, with James D. Smart, of* God Has Spoken; *and co-author, with Frank M. Cross, Jr., of* Early Hebrew Orthography, *the subject on which he collaborated with Dr. Cross while working for his doctor's degree at Johns Hopkins University. Collaboration with the editor of The Pulpit on this sermon series was an outgrowth of a friendship begun at Princeton Theological Seminary.*

It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the Lord
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
and all the nations shall flow to it,
and many peoples shall come, and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

That seems somewhat more remote than Jeremiah's picture. God can do what he wants to, of course, so we won't say this is farfetched. But it does seem a good way off, from here, and our own day is not exactly littered with indications that that great Kingdom of righteousness and love is about to take over.

But the real issue put to us in all this is not which of the pictures is most possible, but rather how it is possible for both to be part of the biblical record. Here we have two great prophets, each scanning the farthermost horizons, and coming back with widely divergent accounts of what might be expected. Not which is possible but which is right, is our question. How come they both to be in the Bible? What do they mean? How do they fit together?

Biblical Dilemma

There have always been Christians who have taken the simple way out of this biblical dilemma. If two pictures in the Bible don't jibe, then concentrate on one and forget the other. Church history is full of lopsided Christians. Thus, some latch on to Jeremiah's dark vision, and set judgment and doom in the middle of their message. For them, Christianity fattens on calamity. No matter what happens, it is a judgment of God. No matter how bad it is, worse is in store.

These are the gloomy gusses, the crepehangers, the thunderers of doom and destruction. One of them went to New York a few years ago (he's going again) and announced that an atom bomb would surely get New York city first, and it would serve the sinful city right if it did, and that would be a judgment of God, and what we needed was a big revival campaign so we could capitalize on the terror that could be worked up by an evangelist worth his salt. That young man must have answered some awfully hard questions for himself, in order to be as sure as he is about what he says. This picture of a Jovian God, hurling a bomb in judgment as the Olympian used to throw thunderbolts—that picture bothers me. I worry about the indiscriminateness of such a judgment. We as a nation have had uneasy feelings about the innocents destroyed by our bombings of Japan, yet now we are asked to meet a God who condemns and executes in the same wholesale way, and who will personally supervise the delivery of the bomb that will destroy us all. Then we are summoned to love this God and give ourselves to him, the idea being that we should by now be too frightened to do anything but repent.

Does that look good to you? Is that how you read your Bible? Is that what you make out of what you know of Christ? What goes on here? Are we to be driven, panic-stricken, into heaven? Are we to have hell scared right out of us? Or are we leaving something out of all this?

Key Signature of Our Gospel

Maybe this is the time for the rest of the gospel story—the part that Isaiah hinted in his prophecy. If things are as bad as we are told they are, maybe now is the time to proclaim our hope. Instead of yipping from our pulpits, "I told you so, I told you so," maybe it is time to say, "I've been told it's so, I've been told it's so." We've been told, "God is still God. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth; he controls the contingencies of history. What happens tomorrow, the future of civilization, the fate of life upon this planet will ultimately be determined not by scientific wisdom or by political folly but by God. His glory will break upon the world in fresh splendor. We may have to pass through very hell but there will be a new dawn in history and the church will be present at the sunrise."* This is a note that must be sounded as strongly as that other one of woe and terror. Here is the note that must be made the key signature of our gospel.

Of course, even in this there is danger. For there are lopsided Christians, too, whose lop is all to the pretty side. They are the Pollyannas, the simple Susans, the preachers of sweetness and light, who think that everything's going to be just dandy. All we have to do is think that everything is bound to turn out all right, and then try to be more and more like Redcap Number 47—and sure enough, everything *will* turn out all right and we won't be bothered with any silly complexes any more. This is the terrible aberration in every Christian gospel which slights the depths of Christian revelation, and overlooks the perseverance of human sin, and soft-pedals the judgment of God upon us.

Alpha to Omega

But we don't get anywhere in understanding the meaning of our two prophecies by playing one off against the other this way. Each alone suggests an inadequate version of Christianity. But if we look at both the way the prophets looked at them, the whole Christian story and gospel comes into perfect focus. For these two stories illuminate and are illuminated by the Bible account of God and his dealings with man. There is no understanding either prophet's picture, and certainly no fathoming the truth of both visions, without a clear view of what the Bible has to say about the relations of God and man.

The prophets took their long look ahead by looking back. They looked back to the creation for

*John A. Mackay, *Christianity and the Frontier* (New York: Macmillan). Used by permission.

clues on what would happen at the far end of history. You know the story: how in the beginning all was chaos and confusion, and how God made a world, ordered a universe out of this primeval turbulence and tumult. Then, when this was done and it was good, he wanted responsive persons with whom he could have fellowship, whom he could love and who would love him, free beings freely responsive to him. So men and women came to inhabit the earth, that God and they might live in intimate, constant and loving communion. That is what humanity was made for. All our parts—our spirits, our intellects, our emotions, our creativity—all these were so made that they would work harmoniously and healthily when the human person was loving and serving the divine Person who loved and served him.

Then, you know what happens. You know it in yourself, once the old Bible stories have given you the hint. Men use their freedom to turn against God instead of falling in with him. Instead of choosing the friendship and fellowship and communion with God for which all our faculties are shaped, we rebel. Everything about us is fashioned to work perfectly while we are seeking God's goals; instead, we revolt and set up our own aims, and wrench our whole personality around to do jobs it was never meant to do, and to go in directions it was never intended to follow. Of course, as soon as this insurrection is mounted, the world is all fouled up. Confusion comes back where order was, and chaos shakes out of the system into which God had pressed it. Instead of behaving like a member of the one world family envisaged by God, man flouts his creator, then tears down his neighbors outside, and is all torn up inside, himself. Mind, body, spirit, soul—all now chase off on unworthy quests and fruitless searches for the peace and harmony to be found only in God, for whom we all were made.

Prophetic Alternative

But God doesn't wash his hands of the whole affair, as we would. That is why he is God and we are not. He perseveres. He still wants that friendship and fellowship and communion with free creatures that he wanted in the beginning. He still wants that order and system he established at the start. And he *is* God. That is why the prophets looked back to the beginnings for a hint about the endings. As God wanted things, and ordered things originally, so would they finally work out. That the prophets knew. The creation is a "preview of coming attractions" for the end. The insubordination of man does not throw God off his track. His will is what it always was; and when, through his seeking and saving, all is restored, the restoration will be the corroboration of creation.

And now we begin to see where these two pictures by the prophets fit. Jeremiah was giving a faithful account of what would happen in the world which continues to go its own willful, doomed way. That world is headed back for the primeval turbulence and turmoil from which God shaped a universe.

> I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
> and to the heavens, and they had no light.

Here in Jeremiah 4:23 we have a picture of the world gone wrong, lurching, stumbling down its own blind alley to the end which was its beginning: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2).

Isaiah's picture complements Jeremiah's, but Isaiah was looking ahead to the community of love, and peace, and freedom which God ordained, and was cheated of, but will yet effect. Isaiah's picture is of the Kingdom of God, which it is ever God's will to establish, and which waits only upon our repentance and return.

So what Jeremiah and Isaiah together give us is the prophetic alternative. Still, as we look down the years, the choice is as they saw it. We go on as we are, undisturbed, until we are disturbed forever, when there is "no man, and all the birds of the air had fled . . . the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins." We go on as we are, and take the consequences. We proceed at our own risk. And the wages of sin is death. And as a man sows so shall he reap.

The Christian's Choice

Or else we decide for God and for his hope and plan, as old as the ages but alive forever. That is, we set ourselves to seek his will (it is all there in Christ) and to do his will. We repent of our evil, we are truly sorry for our sins, we ask his pardon and throw ourselves upon his forgiveness, with our love we respond to his. We become whole men and women, the breach is healed; again the way is open for the world to be remade, and in God's good time the order established in the creation can be restored. Then Isaiah's picture obtains, when God "shall judge between the nations,/and shall decide for many peoples;/and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,/ and their spears into pruning hooks."

Now *when* this great day will come, it is not for us to say. We have a choice to make. As Christians we must decide against the world's continued disintegration. That is not to say that we can decide to escape judgment. Never that. While we are alive we know ourselves as sinners, needing the foregiveness of Christ. But we *can* decide against the destructive pell-mell of a headstrong world, and throw ourselves against its swift drift to chaos. The way we decide against this destiny is by choosing that other destiny, abandoning our self-will, changing our hearts and actions, conforming ourselves anew to the purpose and plan of God. We may not thus actually build that Kingdom of God on earth—God who created that harmony must finally restore it, too. But meanwhile we can show others what that Kingdom is for which we have decided. With our eyes upon Isaiah's picture, we may set up by our actions little pointers, arrows, indicators, all trained on our ultimate hope. Thus our graciousness may be a parable of God's grace; our gentleness, a simile of his peace; our affection, an analogy of his love; our constancy, a likeness of his faithfulness. And others, seeing us, may be brought to honor our King and look forward with us to the triumph of his Kingdom.

THE INTEGRITY OF PREACHING

JOHN KNOX

A plea for biblical preaching as the only kind relevant for our time. A discussion of what the preacher must do and be in order to reach inspired heights. *February 11.* **$1.75**

HEBREW MAN

LUDWIG KÖHLER

A historical study of the thought, physical characteristics, religion, and folkways of the people of the Bible. *February 11.* **$2.50**

THE MESSAGE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

ERIC L. TITUS

A section-by-section commentary on the Gospel of John that assumes it to be an interpretation rather than a historical account of Jesus. *February 11.* **$3.50**

MODERN SCIENCE AND CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

ARTHUR F. SMETHURST

An aim to show the compatibility between science and religion. By the Canon Residentiary of Salisbury Cathedral, who is also a well-known British scientist. *February 11.* **$4**

THE INVINCIBLE CHRIST

MASSEY MOTT HELTZEL

Thirteen sermons that reveal the meaning of Christ as Lord and Saviour. Dr. Heltzel is President Eisenhower's former minister in Augusta, Georgia. *February 11.* **$2**

FAITH IN CONFLICT

CARLYLE MARNEY

An investigation of the difficulties confronting the modern, thinking man—Christian, seeker, or agnostic—as he comes to grips with Christianity's claims. *February 11.* **$2.50**

HOW TO WORK WITH CHURCH GROUPS

MARY ALICE DOUTY

Offers every church school teacher and leader a practical application of the principles of group activity and democratic leadership. With charts. *February 11.* **$2.50**

SHOULD CHRISTIANS DRINK?

EVERETT TILSON

An objective attempt to determine the Christian approach to the problem of drinking, explaining biblical, historical, ethical views. *February 11.* **Paper, $1; Cloth, $2**

DON'T KID YOURSELF!

ROY L. SMITH

An analysis of modern American slang, revealing the truths to be found in ten everyday expressions, interpreted in the light of biblical truths. *February 11.* **$2**

THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE volume 12

A COMMENTARY IN 12 VOLUMES

The books of *James, Peter, John, Jude* and *Revelation,* in King James and R.S.V., with commentary. Also 16 pages of magnificent color photographs including illustrations of the Dead Sea Scrolls; indexes to the entire set; 3 general articles. *Spring.* **$8.75**

at all bookstores

ABINGDON PRESS

Among Us—

Visiting Fireman

By an Itinerant Prophet

THE milk train jerked unwillingly into the Suet Center station at 5:30 in the morning. Naturally it was on time. Trains arriving at that hour rarely have the decency to be late. In the absence of a Pullman car I had spent the preceding night in a coach seat designed to accommodate the rigid spine of a West Point plebe.

As I descended bleary and disheveled to the platform, I was greeted vigorously by the pastor of Old Third Church whose pulpit I was to fill that morning. He was accompanied by four members of his official board and the wives of three of them. Introductions were necessarily somewhat hasty on that icy stage, but not too hasty to prevent three of those present from demanding to know if I had ever met their relatives who lived only eighty miles from the seminary in which I teach.

Breakfast Discussion

Red-eyed and queasy I was driven through a sleeping city to the home of the chief deacon. Here we all sat down to a sumptuous breakfast, the very sight of which turned my pre-dawn stomach. The pastor explained that it was a custom in Old Third Church to hold informal discussions with visiting preachers at breakfast, it being fortunately true that the only train into Suet Center got them all there in plenty of time for that edifying ritual.

Yes, I said, it was gratifying to see so many people turning back to the church. No, I had never met Dr. Peale personally. Well, maybe Billy Graham *was* doing more good than harm. I wasn't sure. No ham fat, thanks; just coffee. No, no bacon, no toast, no jelly-filled doughnuts, no dry cereal; just coffee!

Breakfast and "discussion" went on until Sunday school was about to begin. Then the pastor and I excused ourselves and set out to visit several of the classes. At each stop I was expected to say a charming word but found strength only to be civil.

When Sunday school ended the pastor suggested that I take three or four minutes to relax while he rushed off to "prepare the Great Prayer." But it seemed to me that he returned before I could even sink well down into the chair beneath me. Donning robes we fell in behind the choir, and the processional began.

The service went well enough but it was barely over before I was whisked off to take dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Dives and a "select group" of the younger married set. . . . Yes, it was gratifying to see so many young people returning to the church, No, Reinhold Niebuhr could not be called a fundamentalist. Well, maybe Billy Graham was doing more harm than good. I wasn't sure. No more chicken, thanks. No, no more potato, no more gravy, no more salad. Just coffee, thanks.

Recurring Nightmare

Dinner over I was almost too far gone to protest when the pastor drew me aside and announced that *now* we could retire to his study for a couple of hours of theological conversation until train time! Fortunately for all concerned I awoke screaming, "Just a cup of coffee!"

This is one of my recurring nightmares. I suspect that it is shared by all peripatetic preachers. Most of the theological professors and "name" preachers who go about speaking in widely scattered churches endure serious torments at the hands of good people who are trying hard to be hospitable. It does not take too much imagination to suppose that the very attentions which plague the guest take their toll in energy and patience from the hosts as well. Aware of this, I recovered from my last nightmare trip resolved to set down in print a few basic ground rules for churches to observe in their dealings with a visiting preacher.

When a Speaker Is Invited

My suggestions cannot possibly cover the whole subject. But they may be helpful in setting the tone for a more satisfactory relationship between the wandering prophet and his occasional audiences.

1. *Write an invitation well in advance of the suggested date. Do not telephone.* Deciding to accept or reject a preaching invitation is not a simple matter of consulting a single page in one's desk calendar. The conscientious pastor or teacher must examine the whole period surrounding each invitation. He must be sure that the days immediately preceding the designated date are not too congested to allow adequate preparation, that colleagues or parishioners will not be unduly inconvenienced by his absence, and that his family has made no plans for that time. In addition, advance warning will enable your man to check travel schedules to be sure that he does not end up on a maiming combination of train, bus and dog sled! It is difficult, if not impossible, for anyone to cover all of these considerations while a caller waits expensively at the other end of a long-distance telephone line.

2. *Describe the speaking occasion thoroughly in the original letter.* It is always disconcerting for a preacher to accept an invitation stated in general terms and then find upon further investigation that the situation is a particular kind in which he does not function effectively. The wise speaker knows his own limitations and appreciates a chance to avoid displaying them in the pulpit.

3. *Suggest topics, if this seems desirable, but do not assign a particular theme unless it is important that this specific one be treated.* Every preacher worthy of his calling is eager to suit his sermon to the occasion of its delivery. Suggestions as to subject are often helpful to him in doing so. *But* it is exasperating to be handed a text or topic which demands a great deal of special work only to find out upon arrival that the assignment was mere whim on someone's part and has no particular relevance to the occasion.

4. *Be prepared to pay a reasonable honorarium and tell the guest in advance what it is to be.* The Christian church has always been troubled by the problem of how to measure adequate compensation for men who have been called to preach the gospel. The best answer found so far has been to pay a "fair" wage, based on the financial status of the congregation, and let the clergyman decide what portion of it is to go for good works.

Proper Honorarium

This principle should govern the size of the honorarium paid to a guest preacher. It is incorrect and presumptuous to regard all such payments as "gravy" for the recipient. Like most other men, the wandering preacher lives pretty much to the limits of his anticipated income. Whether it goes for philanthropies or self-indulgence, it *goes*. And it is decidedly unfair for any church to decide unilaterally that it is to be one of its guest's charities. No self-respecting clergyman makes up his preaching schedule with primary regard for financial considerations. But it is somewhat disconcerting to be picked up at the train in a Cadillac, driven to a beautiful church for the service, entertained in a luxurious home at dinner, regaled with stories about new members and soaring budgets, and then sent packing with a check for twenty dollars.

5. *House the guest speaker in a hotel or inn, not in a private home.* All too frequently a mistaken notion of courtesy leads a church to shrink from sending its guest preacher to a hotel for the night. As an alternative to this he is often housed with one of the families of the community in a guest room located between the nursery and bath. Here he is kept awake late and roused early by the normal sounds of an active household. In between, he feels constrained to mouselike deportment in

rder to avoid disturbing his hosts. Most seasoned travelers of the circuit reatly prefer hotels to guest rooms, nless they have close friends in the eighborhood.

Overcrowded Days

6. *Do not feel compelled to fill up ne guest speaker's day.* Men who pend a good deal of time on the road arn to use their free time construcvely or for relaxation. Some find the f hours of a preaching trip excellent r catching up on reading. Others have apers to grade or proof to correct. ery few of them will languish if given me off when not actually speaking. is unfortunate that many host comittees and pastors are under the imression that the guest will be insulted not used every minute. This results crowded schedules and more "activies" than the situation can fully susin. Where a variety of appearances re necessary, the guest should be inrmed of his timetable in advance so iat he does not plan on free hours that ever materialize.

I have no desire to claim the martyr's rown for the peripatetic preacher. No ne forces him to accept any invitations nd he is free to stay close to home conantly. Where the exigencies of a parcular situation make inconvenience nd hardship necessary, he must be eady to accept these. But it does seem ointless to raise problems where none eeds exist and to inconvenience both uest and host in the name of a misken hospitality.

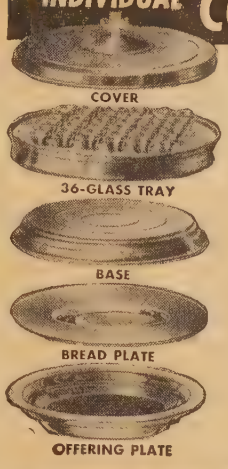
No tomatoes, thanks. Just a cup of offee!

Pulpit Calendar

Feb. 3—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 10—Race Relations Sunday.
Feb. 17—Universal Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 17-24—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 24—7th Sunday after Epiphany.
Mar. 3—The Transfiguration (also Aug. 6).
Mar. 6—Ash Wednesday.
Mar. 8—World Day of Prayer.
Mar. 10—1st Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 17—2nd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 24—3rd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 25—The Annunciation.
Mar. 31—4th Sunday in Lent. One Great Hour of Sharing.
Apr. 7—Passion Sunday.
Apr. 14—Palm Sunday.
Apr. 14-20—Holy Week.
Apr. 18—Maundy Thursday.
Apr. 19—Good Friday.
Apr. 21—Easter.
Apr. 28—Christian Higher Education Sunday.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNION SERVICE by DIETZ



The NOISELESS and popular Communion Service, Everywhere sought and enjoyed. Interlocking Trays stack to convenient attractive units of any desired capacity. 36 glasses to each Tray—all rubber cushioned in straight rows. Do not click, stick, tilt or spill.

Beautiful—Light Weight—Durable

Trays are of finest aluminum, satin finish. Bread Plate and Offering Plate to match. Here is the Communion Outfit your church has long awaited. Investigate TODAY. Also learn of Pastor's Individual Communion Outfit to take the Sacrament to sick and shut-ins. Delivery extra on following prices:

Cushioned Communion Trays, with 36 glasses, complete, each $13.95
Cover, for Trays . . only $5.75 **Base** for Trays . . only 4.75
Extra Glasses for Tray, 1-3/8 in. high . . . . . per dozen 1.25
Bread Plate, aluminum, wide rimmed, 10-1/2 in. . . . only 2.95
Offering Plate aluminum, maroon felt pad 10-1/2 in. . . only 3.50
Pastor's Individual Communion Outfit complete with 6 glasses and carrying case . . . . . only 12.50
Name in gold letters on Carrying Case, extra, per line 75

Complete catalog of Church and Sunday School Supplies FREE on request

Order from your store or direct

WM. H. DIETZ, INC. 10 S. Wabash Ave., Dept. 115 CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS

Will you have insurance at the time you need it?

FEW MINISTERS can afford the financial burden of a serious accident. The extra expense of hospital and doctor bills can seriously disrupt a minister's budget.

The Ministers Life and Casualty Union's "Criterion" policy is a *budget plan* designed for just such emergencies. Because you are a "preferred risk," Ministers Life is able to offer you its Criterion accident policy at an amazingly low price.

Think of the satisfaction and comfort of knowing that you will have help with your doctor and hospital bills through an insurance policy that costs you but $3 a quarter or $12 a year, providing you are under 60 years of age! (It's $4 a quarter or $16 a year if you apply between ages 60 and 65.) Ministers Life invites you to *compare* its Criterion plan with any accident insurance policy you now have or may be considering.

Assuming that you have a satisfactory health record, you can cover the first two months of this fine, low-cost protection just as soon as your completed application with $1.00 is approved. Or, if you desire additional information describing benefits under the MLCU Criterion policy, send coupon for full details. No obligation.

THE MINISTERS LIFE & CASUALTY UNION
Legal Reserve—Non Assessable
10429 Ministers Life Bldg., Minneapolis 16, Minn.
In Canada: 30 Bloor Street W., Toronto 5, Ontario
Please send me "Criterion" policy details and application blank.

Name_____
Address_____
_____
Date of Birth_____ Denomination_____

Neil Gregor Smith

(Continued from page 20)

reaction. The human frame is wonderfully resilient, capable of great exertions; but as Homer sang three thousand years ago: "Naught feebler or frailer does earth bring forth than a man." When the limits of endurance are passed too frequently the body blows a fuse. There are ulcers and a host of psychosomatic disorders which put a halt to activity. When Elijah lay under the broom tree he was told, "Arise and eat, else the journey will be too great for you." There are many for whom the journey is too great. They break down under the strain.

The prophet's strength, too, had been worn down under the tactics of a truculent opposition. Jezebel had sworn to have the prophet's life. In almost any parish the minister is apt to find the counterpart of a Jezebel. There are people so lacking in discernment that they do not like us, so lacking in good judgment that they do not see the reasonableness of our point of view, even when we have taken the trouble to explain it to them, and so truculent that they vow to have our scalps. Elijah encountered a Jezebel; St. Paul encountered an Alexander the Coppersmith, who did him much harm and for whom he prayed that the Lord would reward him according to his works—a prayer which may be freely rendered as, "May the Lord give that fellow what he has coming to him!" There are many happy parishes where one never encounters a Jezebel or an Alexander, but the odds are against it. The persistent opposition of a Jezebel or an Alexander can be very wearing, even to a prophet of the stature of Elijah.

Disillusioned Prophet

There is a strong suggestion in the story of Elijah that part of his trouble had come from an inflated estimate of his own importance. He had taken a very jaundiced view of his predecessors and of his contemporaries. The only conceivable reason for a man saying, "Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers," is that at one time he had thought he was better than his fathers. He had apparently hoped that by his demonstration at Mt. Carmel he could accomplish at one stroke what his predecessors had labored to do over the years. He would give a convincing demonstration of the superiority of Jehovah to Baal. Baal would be discredited in the eyes of the people, and Jehovah would be exalted. It seemed a very simple plan. The fathers must have seemed dull folk not to have thought of such an easy solution themselves. If they had been alert to their opportunities, Baalism would never, surely, have obtained its sway over the people.

So Elijah gave his demonstration. Everything went as well as he could have hoped for. Jehovah had answered by fire. In spite of this demonstration, Baalism persisted. The battle against entrenched evil was not as easy as it had seemed to be. Elijah was disillusioned. He was no better than his fathers, after all.

He Watches Over Us

Elijah had thought that he was not only better than his fathers but better than all his contemporaries. He thought of himself as being the only loyal worshiper of Jehovah left. "I, even I only, am left." Elijah was a great prophet, but he was not quite as big a wheel in the scheme of things as he had supposed himself to be. There were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal. He was not quite the spiritual Atlas he had imagined himself to be, bearing upon his solitary shoulders the weary weight of a wicked world.

If he who sits in the heavens laughs at the plottings of the wicked, it may be presumed that he smiles sometimes at the antics of his servants. He knows what is in man, and he ministered to his despondent prophet.

240 Years of Service

Looking Forward

"To greet the unseen with a cheer" has been the constant aim of the Fund. During its 240 years, it has seen changes and met new occasions with new programs. With its financial stability and its assured place—"First in the hearts of the clergy"—it will gain new fame by serving the present age. You may correspond confidently with:

PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS' FUND
Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia 3, Pa.
ALEXANDER MACKIE, PRESIDENT
1717 — Two Hundred Forty Years — 1957

Now available
2 NEW REPRINTS from
The Christian Century

ARE MINISTERS CRACKING UP?
By William H. Hudnut, Jr.
Is the ministry a man-killing profession as *Life* magazine recently charged? Is there an alarming amount of mental sickness among our clergy? Dr. Hudnut is one who does not think so, and gives his reasons in this cogent article. Reprints $4 a hundred.

HOMES FOR SALE
By Marian Perry Yankauer
It is not the migrating Negro who causes real estate blight, but the white homeowner who flees before the "invasion," says Mrs. Yankauer. If your community is facing this problem you will want copies of this sound article. Reprints $5 a hundred.

Order from
THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY FOUNDATION
407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill.

God ministered to Elijah first by ministering to his body. There was given to the prophet an opportunity for rest and refreshment. He slept and waked, and found a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water at his side. Is there a hint in this that things were really not quite so black as they seemed? Is there a hint that Elijah might look at things a little differently after he had had a good meal and a good sleep? Our physical conditions do alter our mental outlook. There is a suggestion that Elijah's dismal outlook on events and his jaundiced views of both his predecessors and his contemporaries had been colored by his physical exhaustion. When his strength had been recruited he might perhaps see that things were not quite so black as he had painted them.

The Westminster divines interpreted the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" as enjoining respect for the gift of life in ourselves and others, and the use of such means to preserve it as moderation in meat and drink and labor and recreation. There is to be moderation, even in labor—even in a prophet's labor. There may be times and circumstances in which it is justifiable to take a calculated risk, and to say of a particular enterprise, "Here let me burn out for God!" Ordinarily we have an obligation to respect the factors which contribute to the health and strength of our physical bodies. Not even a prophet is justified in becoming a prophet of gloom, a dispenser of despair and a cantankerous critic through exhausting his physical strength and overtaxing his physical capacities.

Sovereign Remedy

God ministered to his despondent servant, too, by giving him a new vision of Himself. "Go forth," he said to his servant, "and stand upon the mount before the Lord." It is a sovereign remedy for warped perspectives to stand upon the mount before the Lord. There is nothing better calculated to save us from the sin and folly of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think than to stand upon a mount before the Lord. Here we see new visions of our work and of our world. Here we are most likely to hear the still, small voice, that is mightier than earthquake or fire or tempest. The still, small voice may ask us disturbing questions, but we are always better off for having heard it.

God ministered to his despondent servant, too, by reminding him of his allies. Elijah had thought he was alone. He was reminded that there were seven thousand in Israel who shared his faith. Baalism was conspicuous in Israel. It had seemed to be everywhere triumphant. There were, however, seven thousand others who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

A Helper Provided

The cure was completed by giving Elijah a helper. He was instructed to negotiate a call to a promising young man named Elisha to be his colleague and successor. In contrast to the conspicuous multitude of the worshipers of Baal, there were fine young men of this type in Israel ready and willing to serve the Lord's cause. In contrast to the many who kissed Baal, there were young men like Elisha who asked permission to kiss his father and mother before embarking on his mission.

So we see Elijah going back to the arena which he had left, renewed in body, renewed in faith, with a helper by his side. The cure was effective and, as far as we know, it was permanent.

When the black mood of depression settles upon us, when we are tempted to despair of our work and to despair of our world, when we find ourselves to be excessively critical of our brethren, it may be that things are not quite as dismal as they appear to be. The fault may lie partly with us. The God of Elijah and of all the prophets can minister to us as he ministered to his servant of old. To hear his still, small voice is the most effective therapy to which we have access.

Correction

MUHLENBERG Press published Ralph W. Loew's *Hinges of Destiny*. The wrong publisher was named in our review of the book (Jan.) as well as in Dr. Loew's biographical sketch accompanying his sermon "The Tragedy of a Good Word."

Lenten — Easter Reading

CONSIDER HIM

Olive Wyon. Three meditations on the Passion Story. The subjects are Jesus in the Upper Room, in Gethsemane, and on the Cross. With an introduction on meditation, prayers, and acts of worship. **$1**

THEY MET AT CALVARY

W. E. Sangster. How could Christ die for *my* sins 1900 years ago? Why do *I* need a Saviour? Why was the Cross necessary? The answers here will make us say, with those who were at Calvary, "*I* was there, too!" **$2**

COME SEE A MAN

Grace Noll Crowell. A new book of 21 meditations and 15 poems by a well-known devotional writer. They invite the reader to come see the man Jesus, and are based on the story of the Woman of Samaria. **$1.50**

PRESCRIPTION FOR ANXIETY

Leslie D. Weatherhead. A famous British preacher and counselor offers the Christian faith and a faultless trust in God as the positive cure for "nerves" and tensions that are prevalent today. **$2.50**

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO PRAYER

John Underwood Stephens. Any one who can breathe can pray. But many *need* to pray and *want* to pray who do not know *how* to pray. Here is help for them and for others who would enlarge a limited experience of prayer. **$2**

A LIFT FOR LIVING

Ralph W. Sockman. 52 brief inspirational readings intended to help meet everyday problems with real Christian courage and insight. By one of America's greatest preachers. **$2**

at all bookstores **ABINGDON PRESS**

Protestant Preaching in Lent

by

HAROLD J. OCKENGA

Pastor, Park Street, Boston

a new complete volume for the entire Lenten season

first in the Eerdmans new annual Lenten series

forty-seven outlined summaries of choice evangelical messages

to aid Protestant pastors redeem this great spiritual season $3.95

At your bookstore

Wm. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

how to plan and conduct a successful

VBS

send for free catalog today!

Choose the Vacation Bible School course that's ALL-BIBLE and all planned for you! With action-packed Bible stories, colorful workbooks, purposeful handicraft and message-filled music—it's the 1957 VBS course by Scripture Press!

Order from your local Christian Bookstore or write . .

SCRIPTURE PRESS
1825 College Ave., Wheaton, Illinois

Dept. PS-27

☐ Send FREE VBS catalog

☐ Send Introductory Packet (5 workbooks, 5 manuals, promotional aids, catalog), $3.15

Money refunded if not satisfied.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ Zone___ State_____

Church _____ Position_____

William G. Rusch

(Continued from page 21)

to this problem. Many beside ministers are ignoring health and family and the day of rest, for worthy or less worthy motives.

To meet this complex problem, let us turn to the Gospels to see how Jesus Christ would treat it. In the earliest Gospel, that according to Mark, Jesus called to him the twelve and began to send them out two by two, after giving them authority over unclean spirits. Notice that first of all Jesus shared responsibility with others. He delegated part of his work. Often we fail to make use of others and try to do all the work ourselves. Some ministers ultimately feel like the weary pastor in a southern town who every noon would go down to sit under a tree and watch a nonstop train go cannonballing through the town. When parishioners asked him concerning this habit, he said, "Please don't think me apathetic or lazy, but it does my heart good to see one thing moving through this town that I am not pushing."

Don't Procrastinate

Notice, Jesus also charged the disciples to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—but to wear sandals and only one tunic. And he said, "Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place."

To be sure, these directions were for a short trip, both in distance and duration, but they say this: get on with the thing of most importance in life; don't spend too great a time in overelaborate preparation. We should remember that the word impediment once meant baggage. And we should follow Jesus' advice. Don't wait until you have a fortune in the bank or the best house in the block before you take time to enjoy life with your family—do it now! Don't wait until you have cared for all other details before you share in the work of the church—do it now! Don't wait until you have a new outfit to come to church—come now!

Often for a woman, the details of caring for her house and family needs blind her to the joys of home and family. Sometimes in church work we spend so much time getting ready for something that by the time it happens we are too spent to enjoy it. Sometimes the administrative and organizational work of the church, intended to serve our church membership, is the very thing that prevents reaching our membership in a better way.

One is reminded of the administrative expert who finally met the girl of his dreams. Having little time, he mimeographed 365 postcards addressed to her, each saying, "I love you." He instructed his office that one card was to be sent each day of the year. At the end of the 365 days, so the story goes, the girl married the postman. He had been on hand.

There is always danger that by the time a great idea is completely organized and housed, the original impulse will have been forgotten. The day of opportunity may slip by if too much time and effort are dedicated to providing the means for obtaining what is important in life.

Jesus Prescribed Rest

Perhaps the most significant thing the Gospels tell us about this mission of the disciples is to be found in what happened when they returned to Jesus. The record is that "they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them." Evidently they returned to Jesus with great enthusiasm and told him all that they had done and taught. Perhaps they felt this was important work, the work of the Kingdom, the greatest work of their lives. Perhaps they thought they should immediately go out again and continue day after day. Yet notice what Jesus did. "He said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat."

His answer is both a prescription for the immediate need of the disciples returning from a tour and a word for all lives at all times: rest in a quiet place to regain depleted physical and nervous strength—the needed physical rest, away from the push of the milling crowd that would not even give them time to eat. Watchful care of health and strength is a primary religious duty. When we fail to take that care we sin against God. We snatch away from his full use the instrument that he ought to have. If we are too busy to allow strength to be renewed by withdrawal and rest, we are too busy to serve God with our best. Jesus knew the value of silence and rest. How did he go on? How did he continue in the face of adversity, hostility, misunderstanding? He went apart to pray to God and find renewed strength.

Each of us has a tremendous need for a time of healing quiet—a time for the spirit to expand, a time for communion with God, a time to find ourselves, a time to say, "Be still, my soul; thy God doth undertake/ To guide the future as he has the past." John Greenleaf Whittier expressed this need in the last verse of his hymn:

> Drop thy still dews of quietness,
> Till all our strivings cease;
> Take from our souls the strain and stress,
> And let our ordered lives confess
> The beauty of thy peace.

How to Meet Failure

One last thing that has particular application to ministers and yet has meaning to everyone, Jesus told the disciples when they went out on their mission. He said, "And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them." These words are not a

ady and easy excuse for quitting a job
st when it becomes really hard, or
fore all the possibilities have been
mpletely explored. But they do tell
to go on in spite of difficulty and
appointment, and not let ourselves
completely stopped. However, other
apters are to be written; if the first
ls to turn out as we had hoped, we
e to go on to another. We are to shake
the dust of that failure and disap-
intment from our persons.

Remember that even Jesus Christ
t failure in Nazareth. "He could do
mighty work there because of their
belief." There are some we cannot
ach and win; some hearts are hard-
ed, closed to our words and pleadings.
en Luther suffered discouragement
d despair, as on the day when his
fe reminded him that he was acting
if God were dead, but God still lived.
Perhaps this is the most important
rd of all. There are things in life
at must be left to the care and keep-
g of Almighty God. It is my personal
lief that many times, as ministers and
Christians, we forget that we cannot
ake every situation come out right.
course we must try. But there comes
time when we must leave matters in
e hands of Almighty God. Only frus-
ation and anxiety, mental and physi-
l breakdown will come if we do other-
se. Often someone tells us, "I've done
erything"; but the minister must re-
y, "Have you prayed, have you
rned it over to God?"

The story is told of old Bishop Quay,
cing the floor with a candle in his
nd, wrestling with problems of tan-
ed lives and the world that moved
m to tears. Then, after pacing half
e night, he blew out the candle and
id, "Lord, I have carried it half the
ght; you carry it the rest." And he
nt to bed.

This is what the apostle Paul meant
hen, at the end of his letter to the
hesians, he strenghthened them for
difficult day, urging them, "having
ne all, to stand." There comes a time
hen we must do that, when we must
ve our problems with God, secure in
s hands that will never fail.

Pulpit Post

(Continued from page 2)

Everybody Is Happy

SIR: With reference to bazaars and
her forms of money-making on a lim-
d scale, I'm for them! My church
ises nearly $70,000 a year, chiefly
om tithes and offerings. But once a
ar the ladies have a bazaar (this
ar their one-day sale netted $1,400);
d the men sell Christmas trees, giving
eir profits to a children's home of our
nomination. In these enterprises
ere is opportunity for teamwork and
lowship, and the community patron-
s in a big way. Nobody is hurt and
erybody is happy.

C. FRED WILLIAMS.
First Methodist,
Hampton, Va.

The First Two Books of the Significant
HARPER *Series on Theological*
Education in America

THE MINISTRY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

***Edited by* H. RICHARD NIEBUHR and DANIEL D. WILLIAMS**

Eight outstanding American church historians comment penetratingly on nine great epochs in the history of the ministry and what they mean to the church today.

The Ministry in the Primitive Church **by JOHN KNOX**
The Ministry of the Ante-Nicene Church **by GEORGE WILLIAMS**
The Ministry in the Patristic Period **by GEORGE WILLIAMS**
The Ministry in the Middle Ages **by ROLAND H. BAINTON**
The Ministry in the Time of the Reformation **by WILHELM PAUCK**
Priestly Ministries in the Modern Church **by EDWARD R. HARDY**
The Ministry in the Puritan Age **by WINTHROP HUDSON**
Rise of the Evangelical Conception of the Ministry in America: 1607-1850 **by SIDNEY E. MEAD**
The Protestant Ministry in America 1850 to the Present **by ROBERT MICHAELSEN**

$5.00

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY

By H. RICHARD NIEBUHR

This book presents a vital new conception of the ministry. It gives a challenging definition of the true church and foresees a theological school which will serve the enlarged view of the ministry, the church and the community. "Important enough quite by itself to justify its earliest possible circulation in the whole church." — *Christian Century.* $2.50

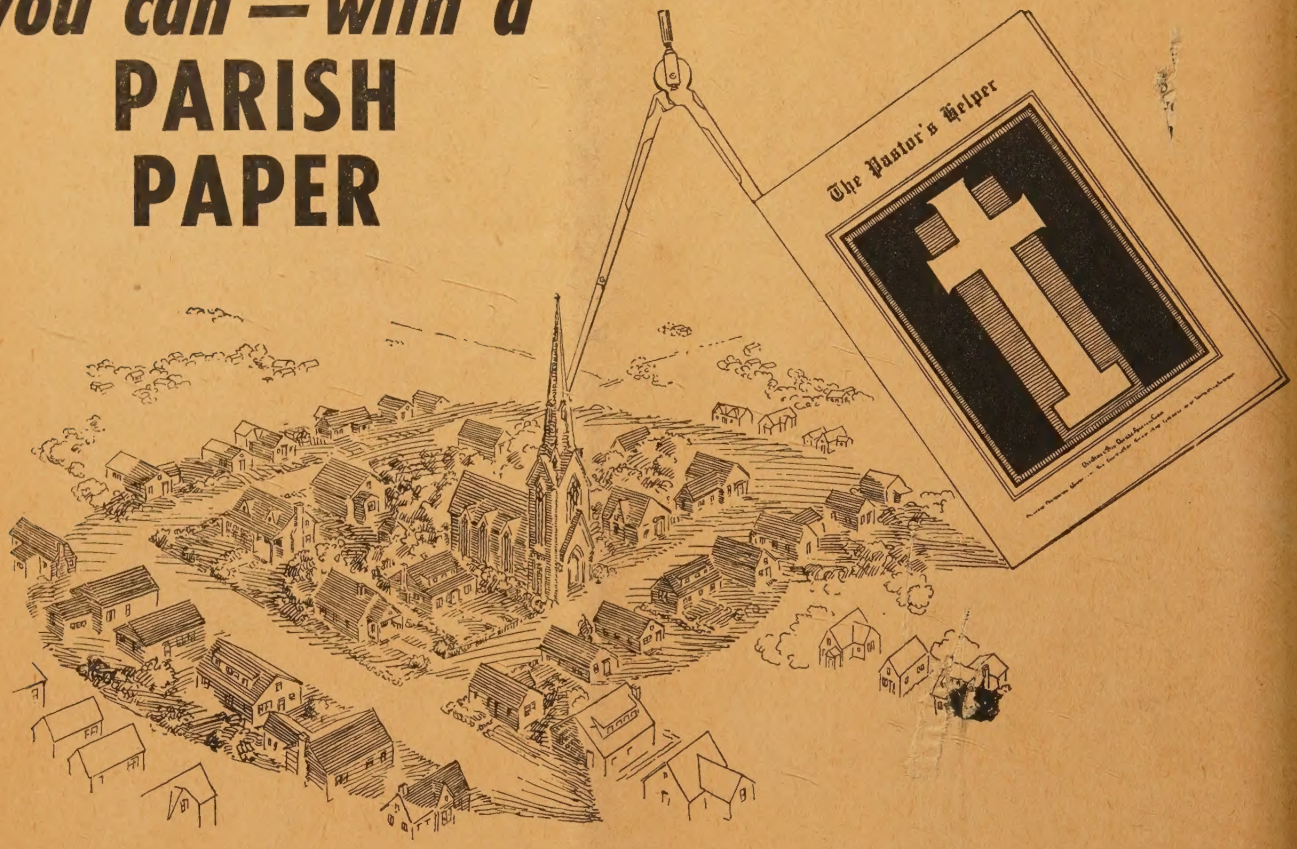
At your bookseller

HARPER & BROTHERS • NEW YORK 16, N.Y.

CHOIR ROBES
Newest colorfast fabrics available. Write for Catalog A48
E. R. MOORE CO.
268 Norman Ave., Brooklyn 22, N. Y.
932 Dakin St., Chicago 13, Ill.
1641 N. Allesandro St., Los Angeles 26, Calif.

WIDEN YOUR CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

you can — with a PARISH PAPER



NOT ONLY does a Church Paper extend the area of your Church's influence — it strengthens and intensifies this influence. It knits more closely the members into one large family. It increases membership and attendance — thus adding to collections.

A Parish Paper is the ideal method to keep the members informed of Church activities and to stress the aims and objectives of the Church. It encourages those devoting their time and energy to forwarding the Master's work and inspires others to assume their share of the parish responsibilities.

It puts into permanent form your messages so that they reach a much larger audience. It is a real help in counteracting the forces of evil in the community.

It aids in building up Church finances. Additional funds and special donations are obtained with no embarrassment. It makes unnecessary appeals from the pulpit for financial help.

Whether your Church is large or small, and regardless of where located, you may publish a Parish Paper if you take advantage of our Standardized Service.

FOR SAMPLES, PRICES AND FULL PARTICULARS REGARDING OUR SERVICE AND THE HELPFUL SIXTEEN-PAGE ILLUSTRATED PARISH MANUAL CONTAINING DETAILED EXPLANATION OF PUBLISHING PROCEDURE, FILL OUT AND MAIL THE COUPON.

Do it NOW. No obligation, of course.

USE THIS COUPON

Please send The Parish Paper Manual, sample parish papers, and full particulars regarding your Standardized Service.

Name.....

Street.....

City.....

TP.....State.....

The National Religious Press

523 Ottawa Ave.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN